The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs
FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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Week by Week

PERHAPS one of the most confusing and difficult situations ever faced by the Church in her history is the present necessity for a double refusal in relation to the two ideologies with which so much of the world is today enamored. As soon as it became a movement of any force and consequence, atheistic and materialistic communism had to be condemned and recognized as a bitter and unscrupulous enemy. In time another secular movement absorbed into its program a bitter antipathy and a commitment to active struggle against communism; this movement was in its first effective manifestation Italian fascism and in its present most effective form, German national socialism. Yet even in this bitterest enemy of its own bitterest enemy the Church found not an ally, but, in essence, another enemy. And the whole process must be, especially to those who do not like to walk on tight-ropes, extremely confusing. The ever-present and actual confusion about it lies at the base and vitiates the structure of much of what is said and done today, even by Catholics. For almost never in human history has there been such a triangular struggle; nearly always a three-sided fight has resolved itself into a two-sided fight, which is the normal pattern for fights. And the resolution has usually come through one of the three contestants choosing what is known as the lesser of two evils. But in this case there can be no such simplification. How the Holy See feels about it has been made clear; the Pope's strictures on the present régime in Germany become more and more intense. He has taken the occasion of a meeting of Christian Archeologists in Rome to liken the Nazi attitude toward the Church to the persecutions of Julian the Apostate and to liken some of the Nazis to Judas Iscariot.

The Double Refusal

IN THE Pope's address there is one passage which reminds us again of his great age and of the trials to which he is put in his last years. "We constantly tell God we would be most grateful if He were to concede us a good death. It would certainly be a rest for an old and now tired worker. But we cannot but add, like good old Saint Martin, 'If we still can do something for the common good, Thy will be done, O Lord.'" And then once more Pius XI defined his policy: "For the common good! This is the policy of the Pope, for it is a lie—we repeat, a lie, a lie, a lie—that has never been sufficiently denied, that the Holy See and the Pope pursue any policy but the glory of God and the good of souls. The Pope only follows one policy from which no force on earth can separate him: to give something to the common good. This is the policy we have always followed. This is a policy we will continue to follow so long as God gives us the possibility, the strength, the grace to do so."

Two Fronts of Education

NEWS FROM Notre Dame and New York indicates that November is to be an important month for Catholics in education. To be effective, education, naturally, must have influence beyond academic walls, and to keep alive, education must create — it must achieve new knowledge; must bring ideas and principles in constructive relationship with changing and new social and personal facts; must constantly elaborate ideas adequate to deal with man and his environment, part static but part changing with revolutionary speed. The Bellarmine School of Social Sciences in New York City, conducted in St. Ignatius parish for the whole city, breaks down school walls and makes the families which it reaches more acutely aware of "the basic prin-

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ciples of the Catholic Social Code." The brilliance of the plan to make it a school for women, Catholic and non-Catholic, is satisfyingly provocative and leads to the longest thoughts and conjectures. The faculty assembled by Father Nevils and Father Carpenter includes eminent men and eminent women, and THE COMMONWEAL is gratified that Ruth Byrns, one of its contributing editors, will be one of them. Also during the first week of November, the University of Notre Dame is to conduct a symposium on political and social philosophy, gathering together speakers from whose meeting it is easy to hope for most genuine intellectual progress. The lecturers (most of them also writers for THE COMMONWEAL) are Maritain, Friedrich, Kerwin, Hermens, Briefs, Adler, Gurian, Fitzgerald, Davidson, Simon, Michel, Fenwick, a group of leaders whose unity in one program is certainly significant. This is an alive and creative group, not in the fad of materialism and collectivism, and no more so in the backwater of standpattism or in the hysteria of modern tyranny. They have all registered their "double refusal" to be stampeded into communism or fascism; there is hope that together they may help show with new clearness a unified theory and practise of real political and social advancement.

THE DIES COMMITTEE is not our ideal of a judicial organization. The President's attack was pretty cogent as well as very stimulating. The Dies Committee has never offered any of the necessary basic definitions, such as what is communism, what is foreign communism, how do you tell a communist, what is a fellow traveler, when do you control an organization, what helps communism, what hurts it. And the committee's greatest injustice has very likely been to Governor Murphy, a political leader we feel confident has done more to keep communism away than all the Hagues, Merriams and Dies in the country. But these are no reasons why communism shouldn't be an issue at elections, and they are no reasons why the menace of communism is absent. The President is by no means free of of responsibility for the thing the Dies Committee is; his party has tried to sabotage it and the federal executive branch has spurned it. The Democratic party is afraid of the communist issue, not necessarily because it is at all communistic but because the way propaganda operates, a red scare would most likely throw support to the more conservative party. Instead of trying to make propaganda work better and more intelligently, the less conservative Americans have tried to pooh pooh the whole Dies business, and that is proving impossible because there obviously is a lot of pinkishness in America. The prime failing of the Dies Committee is not in putting the communist question in politics, but in the ineffectual and barbarous way it encourages the country to try to solve the question. When it comes to repression or reform, we favor reform.

Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Dies

Minor Query

NOTHING really new can be said, of course, about the Russian militant atheistic tactics. Religion has been extirpated without mercy and without pretense. Those professing religious belief, or even suspected of harboring it, live precariously, with personal or political insecurity; they are often imprisoned and killed on this or that technical charge which does not conceal, and is not meant to conceal, the nature of the true charge. But it smites the imagination afresh to read the particulars of the new campaign against religious revivals among children. Mr. Harold Denny's latest dispatch to the New York *Times* quotes the official instructions for this latest drive by the Commissariat of Education. They stress the deplorable fact that, owing to the negligence of teachers, anti-religious instruction has waned and youth in many places has apostatized from non-belief. For instance, during the last Christmas season, many children gathered and sang Christmas carols; last Easter, many stood with their elders at religious services bearing in their hands the candle of faith in the Resurrection. It is not the profounder element of wrong in all this that strikes one at first—the offense to God and the human soul in the dreary yet terrible incantations about religions being "ideologies of slavery, implacably contradicting science and directed against the interest of toilers." It is the sheer pathos of the situation. That men will offend God and destroy the human soul is known; but that they will display an ogrish zeal for snatching candles from children's hands and silencing songs on their lips, almost seems to take a separate kind of explaining. But of course it is not really separate; no beauty of custom, no natural tradition, however hallowed, no human piety, however appealing, is safe when its supernatural roots are cut. That is the law of Christendom. It may be a service, in the end, to have it so bleakly demonstrated to the kindly half-believers all around us who have never taken it in.

An Outward and Visible Sign

THE RECENT Eucharistic Congress in New Orleans gave occasion for many fine things to be said: the Holy Father, the President, and among others, Cardinal Mundelein and Archbishop Glennon, all said things that needed and constantly need saying, and that is as it should be. Particularly to be noted is the conspicuous part assigned to Negroes in the ceremonies of the Congress, and the way in which their interest in the proceedings was provided for.

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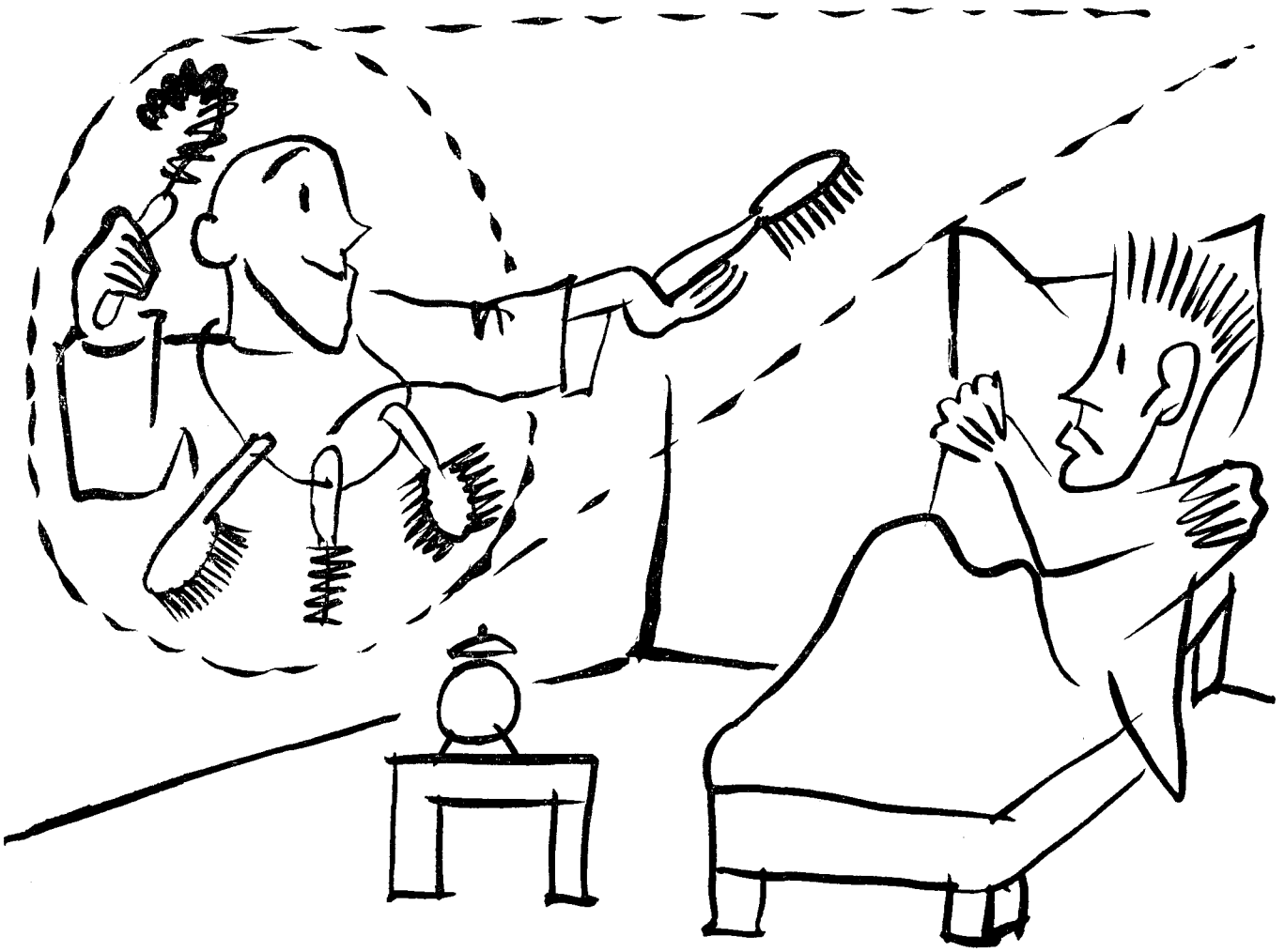

. . . Waking up with the Brushman!

That in itself is a salutary indication of Catholic opposition to racism. And the whole Congress served an even greater purpose in a world which is no longer Christian and which more and more denies the central principles which Christianity affirms; the Congress was a living demonstration that there are still many who would preserve Christian values, who are willing to make personal sacrifices in the effort to preserve these values. One of the most effective propaganda devices for totalitarianism of all sorts is the tremendous mass gathering; it was first used in Russia; Germany has improved on the Russian lesson. And Christians also can and should and do show their strength when they use the same weapon. For, as Cardinal Mundelein said, "It is either the altar of Christ or the altar of evils. It is either Communion with the life-giving Body of Our Lord or the barbaric engorgement of all human society. It is union and charity in Christ among men of all nations, or it is separation, hatred, war and bloodshed. There is no other choice. The salvation of the world is in the Blessed Sacrament." And in trying to persuade the world of the truth of this proposition, every pure means at our disposal should be strenuously employed.

Why Should America Mobilize?

THE DRIVE of the administration to foist a wholesale national armament program upon the nation is rapidly gaining momentum. In addition to Washington talk of a two-ocean navy, the biggest navy in the world, the biggest air force in the world and other fire-eating ambitions, the government's plans for industrial mobilization are beginning to reach the public. Some 10,000 separate industrial plants are to be made ready for transformation into factories for planes, gas masks, 75 mm. guns, hand grenades, rifles, machine guns and other weapons. The War Department wants a two-year war supply of the following strategic raw materials brought in from foreign shores: ferro-manganese, chrome and tungsten ores, pig tin and rubber, ac-

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cording to enabling bills to be introduced in Congress. At the same time the army and navy are calling for ever heavier appropriations and ordering more planes, anti-aircraft guns and machine tools, while plans for new landing fields, bigger navy yards, new bases and other large-scale constructions are being drawn up. Public utilities, railroads and factories are to be modernized and expanded. Stock shares are booming, particularly chemicals, steels and aviations. Can anyone with a scraping acquaintance with modern history and economics call this latest New Deal recovery attempt a prelude to prosperity?

BUT THE basic question is, why are we planning to fight? The 5,000,000-man army which the various plants are to be put in readiness to supply with the best-in-the-world new American rifle can mean but one thing—service overseas. We are flatly opposed to this, either in Europe, Asia or South America. It is time the President informed the nation of the scope of the latest national defense plans and specified why he and his advisers are planning to place the country on a war footing. There is no enemy at the gate. Any attack on our shores is inconceivable. Actually the administration's new "preparedness" plans are definitely laying the foundation for dragging us into another war "to save democracy." The irony of it all is that the program is introduced as a means of keeping us out of war—a means of peace. It is drawn up to protect us against dictatorships by imposing a form of dictatorship comparable to that of present-day Germany, Italy, Japan or Russia. It proposes to prepare for peace by making America warlike. Peace-lovers throughout the land should unite before it is too late in opposing this fatal policy of the imperialistic big stick.

THE UNITED STATES has no business employing its armaments in accordance with its sympathies in the Far East, for instance. But there are at last possibilities of Four Power mediation as far as Japan is concerned. It is difficult to believe, however, that the fall of the once great cities of Canton and Hankow will lead immediately to a cessation of the tragic hostilities. Few observers ascribe the surrender of both cities without a show of resistance to an absolute collapse of the Chinese forces, a large part of which is still intact. Dynamite and fire carried on the "scorched earth" policy and once again the Chinese capital was moved still further into the interior, to Chungking. But Chinese resistance beyond the smallest-scale guerilla warfare will be terrifically handicapped from now on. Japanese control of all the big industrial cities, the seaports and the main railroads has all but cut off the forces of Chiang Kai-shek from the outside world. With Canton no longer sending up supplies for his harassed armies, he must depend on what little he can obtain from far-off Burma, Inner Mongolia and Russian Turkestan except for an Indo-China which is threatened by the Japanese victories. The fact that in regimented Tokyo the fall of Hankow failed to arouse any popular enthusiasm is the one hopeful indication for the desperate Chinese cause. And effective unrest among the Japanese people would indicate that dictatorial economic and financial magic can only postpone for a time an inevitable popular uprising against war, atomization and unendurable privation.

Canton and Hankow

BACK of the town and gown high-jinks in Cambridge there lies a problem which is sure to come more and more before public attention as time goes on and as harassed government seeks untapped sources of revenue. This is the question of the exemption from taxation of private educational and charitable institutions. It is little likely that any now living will see the day, short of a revolution's intervention, when buildings actually used for worship will be threatened by taxes. But with schools and colleges and universities and religious houses and any of the numerous agencies of charity which require housing on a large scale the case gives a specious semblance of being different. As with Harvard University, whose magnificent endowments and large real estate holdings yield to the city of Cambridge substantially no direct tax revenue and which at the same time makes use of many facilities provided by tax money, there is always a tendency for local government to get impatient and urge some Gordian solution. At least one state already makes it legal to tax private schools of all kinds. And in many states it is the practise to tax such portions of school and university property as yield an income—dormitories, cooperative stores and dining halls. The solution suggested for Harvard has its merits; the idea of a separately incorporated university municipality which takes care of its own services and is thus at least no charge upon neighboring tax-payers might meet a very real practical problem, although it clearly would be giving Cambridge something for nothing. But in so far as it suggests the notion that private institutions should not have tax-exemption, it is bad. Harvard may be rich enough to survive any possible tax bill, but in this it would be exceptional. And in such matters it is a case of all or none. Most private institutions cannot be taxed and survive. The survival of private educational and charitable agencies is worth far more to America than any possible tax bill which might be assessed—and perhaps collected—against them.

Henleins at Harvard

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THE MORE scientific scientists complain that people are always looking for magic; for instant diagnoses and short-cut cures by potion. But it is only fair to say that science sometimes comes across with the magic, and hence must bear its share for the public's unscientific impatience. It has not produced magic in the case of cancer, in spite of the desperate hopes of multitudes. But it brewed an authentic potion in insulin. And it has just announced (at the meeting of the National Academy of Sciences) an even more astounding discovery—a double-barreled miracle this time, for it will be profoundly felt in the economic as well as the medical field: a cure, sure, speedy and almost costless, for pellagra. Pellagra is a nutritional disease—primly innocuous words which do not begin to hint at the malignity they cover. It attacks large groups whose diet is inadequate and unvarying—notably among the poor of the South—afflicting them with the sores and suppurations that might be associated with some dread infection, disabling them in mind and body, and killing great numbers of them. Experiments, chiefly those of the United States Public Health Service, have proved that pellagra can be controlled by corrective feeding; but the red-meat element of this diet makes it prohibitively dear for the very class it is designed to help. Further experiments, for which separate groups of physicians must be credited, now show—almost incredibly—that pellagra can be prevented, or cured within a period of days, with nicotinic acid, a by-product of the preparation of tobacco. Some fabulous and invisible co-enzyme does the work. This will beyond question work a beneficent revolution in the South, where the gain, personal and economic, from the restoration to health and working ability of a large section of the populace, is indeed beyond computation. And it shows science at her best—keen and tirelessly patient, thrifty in means, doggedly concerned to salvage life. May she long prevail!

Cure for Pellagra

Russian Exile

By NATHALIE TROUBETSKOY

THE TRAIN to Civitavecchia is quite short, made up of old-fashioned, grimy, steep carriages and an old steam engine, relics of a fast disappearing uncomfortable past. It leaves from the hindermost platform and is invaded by meek and anxious islanders long before starting time.

Ticket collectors and *facchinos,* giving brisk answers to precise travelers, seem nonplussed when asked for the 3:10 to the coast. My destination being a small seaside resort, reserved to the rich, as it has no station of its own and is easily reached by car, seems off the map till the official summer season. I get vague information: "If the 3:10 stops at Maccarese for Fregene? *Eh ben, mè pare che si.* Ask the conductor. Yes, there was a bus there last year."

At binnario 24 I hoist myself up three perpendicular and superimposed dirty steps into an open third class carriage. It is mostly occupied by one family, peasants by the look of them and their luggage, probably Sardinian *contadini* returning to their craggy island after a visit to the mainland. They will make more pleasant companions than the usual sleepy ticket-of-leave soldiers or the shabby little commercial travelers. A large black bundle, with a baby bottle sticking out of it, is obligingly removed and I am given a bench to myself. I am unconsciously struck by the silence and reserve of my company, so unlike the garrulous, gesticulating Italian peasantry. These talk in subdued voices, without the customary eloquent aid of dark hands. The clatter and hustle on the platform make the words inaudible.

I observe the family: an elderly couple, three young men, a young woman and a moon-faced infant of some ten months. The old people are iron-grey, stocky, hard-faced and weather-beaten. The old man owns a fine pair of bristly mustaches and a pair of keen jet black eyes; the old lady has the traditional shelved bosom of her period and estate, and her hair set in a very tight knot at the most perfectly wrong place on her head; her features are finer cut than those of her rugged spouse. The sons range in age from about seventeen to twenty-five, dark, slim, pale young men, with long eyes and long, slender fingers. The girl is surprisingly fair, square of face and shoulders, with very clear, deep-set, blue eyes, an expressive mouth; the flaxen hair is cut in a stark-straight and square, un-modish bob; the turquoise woolen jumper she wears, the cut of the skirt, the shoes belong more to 1918 than 1938. Little Miss Moon-Face completes the picture, for she is dressed in a stuffy velveteen frock of a particular dead red, that used to be called *vieux rose* in pre-war days and reminds one of "natural" oak furniture and unnaturally waved hair. The men's clothes are less datable: the shapeless boots and hats, the plain near-black garments of all working men all over the world. It seems such a pity that they are not wearing the picturesque national costumes of Sardinia, but most folk when traveling prefer to be inconspicuous.

Then it suddenly comes to me, these people are different: they are surely not only quieter, but neater and cleaner than the average touseled, excited primitive island inhabitant; and surely the cadence, the rhythm of their low voices is not

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Southern Italian. With a bump and a jerk, the little train starts, the noises of the platform slip away and I can now hear better. That I hear Russian is surprising enough, for the travelers are so obviously not of the class, or type, of old Russian exiles; that a party of Russian peasants should be traveling through Italy now is incredible, for in no case would they leave the U.S.S.R. One odd, adventurous, desperate or designing man might slip through, but never an entire patriarchal family. And my amazement grows as I realize that they speak without a hint of dialect or accent of any sort in pure, cultured Russian.

My first advances are received very guardedly, which, considered impartially and from the most opposite angles, is as it should be. I hear they come from Mid-Asia, from the country near Tashkent, and are proceeding to Sardinia. They had to go through Siberia, and Moscow, and Poland, and Berlin. It has taken them just over a month without a day's stop to get to Rome. Yes, here they had three days' rest and slept in beds. The eldest son answers laconically, the others are silent. Then Miss Moon-Face sets up her first and very legitimate little wail and, in our joint efforts to console her, conversation becomes more general. I come from the South too, I explain, but not from quite so far — from the Ukraine.

"Oi, oi," the blond girl speaks for the first time, her sweet mouth quivering, "so do I! From Chernigov!"

"Well, then we are both *hohlushki,*" say I, giving the Southern nickname, and they all burst out laughing, complimenting me on my unforgotten dialect.

From that moment the story unfolds itself more readily, yet always with a curious reticence as regards details. The father is Italian by birth, went out to Russia many, many years ago as a skilled workman of an unmentioned trade. The mother is partly Italian too, from Stamboul; this, then, explains the almond eyes and supple grace of her sons. Now they go to the island where the old man's sister still lives; there they will have to find work. The eldest is a mechanical engineer, it might be easier for him; but the second, a dreamy-faced, delicate youth, is a painter and was just finishing at the art school in a Ukrainian capital when they had to go. The youngest is only a lad, he will adapt himself, though there will be no university for him now, and perhaps a farmer's life instead.

They were all born in Russia, somewhere; thought themselves Russian, but luckily they all spoke Italian fairly well—the old man never gave it up, just as he never gave up his Italian passport. Now he is really glad to get back to his native land. And they? The young folk shrug their shoulders, look out of the window. Again the baby saves the situation—she is sleepy and wants her daddy. The poor mite after a month of train life is pallid and listless, but remarkably clean and sweet-tempered. The tall young man in the black shirt fondles his small daughter, his brooding, taut expression lightened by tender smiles. And the baby crows in her wholesome international baby language.

The artist speaks of his regret at not having visited all the galleries and museums of Rome; they knew nobody, spoke to nobody. We discuss the Byzantine method of mosaic, I tell him of the school in the Vatican, of the exhibition that is in charge of Russian artists who might help him. But what is their religion, Orthodox or Catholic? The boys look away again; the young father lifts his handsome eyebrows: "Well, I suppose we are Italians after all." The baby's name is Lilli, yes, short for Elizabeth; and the country just here is very flat and green, rather like the Ukrainian steppes, is it not? Lilli gurgles approval, sucking her mother's metal wedding ring.

A ticket collector comes in, Lilli's father pulls out a whole wad of multi-colored, crumpled tickets. The official looks through them. "No change for you till the end," is all his comment. But my innocuous pink day-trip ticket disturbs him greatly. *"Con questo non si va!* With this one does not go to that place Fregene, we do not stop at Maccarese. Here we are at Pontegalleria, you get off here, *presto!"* he shouts, waving his arms and shooing me as a hen. I scramble down the ladder and have just time to shake hands with the family as the train moves away. The blonde girl and the baby smile their placidly secret Slavic smile, the guard glares at me with disfavor over their shoulders.

Sitting on a rickety fence by a tiny streamlet that skirts a very dusty and deserted highway, I wait for a stray car, for the summer buses are not running yet and the next train comes in two hours, if it stops. The blue-green water bubbles and tinkles gently, over my head white acacias droop sweet-scented fluffy bunches. A horse, a very fine, clean roan, with a white muzzle and white socks, is loosely tethered to the other side of the fence; he is saddled with a high-backed, broad wooden saddle; the young green wheat he nibbles is already four feet high. A flock of white geese sits in the dusty grass by the roadside; in the field beyond, a team of huge steel-grey oxen are patiently plodding over newly turned, very black earth; a boy's breaking voice sings a lilting tune; swifts fly low, keening shrilly. It is goin to rain. And this is really Italy? Or am I back in the Ukraine, or in some sleepy, deserted little station in the Turkestan? Surely the scents, the sounds, the scenery are the very same!

Then I remember that I did not ask for the names or the address of my train companions.

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Monopoly Investigators

By OLIVER McKEE, JR.

Public hearings of the Monopoly Investigation are scheduled to begin during November. The personnel of the investigating committee is important to its work, and we have asked Mr. McKee to give us the respective backgrounds of the members.—The Editors.

CITING the dangers which inhere in the concentration of economic power, President Roosevelt, in his message of April 29, asked Congress for authority to make a comprehensive study of monopolies. His proposals included a survey of monopolistic financial control over the production and distribution of goods and services, and an examination of the existing price system, and the price policies of industry.

To find ways of achieving "a fuller and more balanced use" of the nation's resources, is the central aim of the investigation which is now getting under way. Though Congress declined to accede to the President's request that the inquiry be placed exclusively in the hands of the executive agencies, it authorized a study along the broad lines proposed by the President. The investigation will be conducted by a Temporary National Economic Committee, made up of six members of Congress and six representatives of executive departments and agencies.

Under a mandate to submit definite legislative recommendations, the National Economic Committee, during the summer months, has laid the groundwork for the most searching examination of the American business structure ever attempted. Behind closed doors, an army of government economists and statisticians have been assembling data on alleged monopolistic practises. The initial reassuring statements of Chairman O'Mahoney have allayed somewhat initial fears that the so-called anti-monopoly investigation will develop into a punitive "witch-hunt." That the investigation is of vast potential importance, and that it may lead to legislation to effect far-reaching changes in our national economy, however, is already plain enough.

Twelve men will direct the investigation. Congress has given them wide authority. They will decide what specific industries are to be placed under the microscope, what preliminary reports shall be issued and when, what business leaders will be invited to appear before the committee, and the nature and scope of the legislative proposals to be submitted to Congress later. Who are these twelve men and what are their respective backgrounds?

Senator Joseph C. O'MAHONEY is the committee's chairman. Born in Chelsea, Massachusets, fifty-four years ago, O'Mahoney headed west as a young man in 1908. After engaging in newspaper work in Boulder, Colorado, and Cheyenne, Wyoming, he came to Washington as secretary to the late Senator John B. Kendrick of Wyoming. Later he himself became a candidate for the Senate, but was defeated. In 1929 he was elected Democratic national committeeman from Wyoming. In 1932, he became a member of the subcommittee that drafted the Democratic platform. At Chicago, he attracted the attention of James A. Farley, and after the election of Mr. Roosevelt, he was offered and accepted the post of first assistant postmaster general. Nine months later, he was appointed to the Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Kendrick. In 1934, he was elected in his own right, by a sizable majority.

Though a liberal and a supporter of many New Deal measures, O'Mahoney has demonstrated, on many occasions, independence of mind and action. Current trends toward bureaucracy and centralization of government have had few sharper critics on Capitol Hill than the Wyoming Senator. He wrote a large part of the Senate Judiciary Committee's historic report against the Roosevelt Court enlargement bill. He opposed the governmental reorganization measure. Author of a bill proposing federal licensing of all businesses engaged in interstate commerce, he shows the West's traditional mistrust of the "money power" of the East, and its hostility to the concentration of economic power. Though sympathetic with the broad objectives laid down by the President,O'Mahoney favors an objective rather than a punitive investigation.

The two other Senate members of the National Economic Committee are William E. BORAH of Idaho, and William H. KING of Utah. Like Chairman O'Mahoney, both have a reputation for independence of mind. Borah, knight errant of the Senate, has for many years been attacking monopolies. High prices due to monopolistic controls, he believes, are a major cause of our present economic troubles. Borah is in sharp disagreement, at many points, with the economic and political philosophy of the New Deal. King is an anti-New Deal Democrat. As a Westerner, he holds no brief for monopolies. In the light of his Senate record, he is likely however to oppose any attempt by the New Deal to make undue political capital out of the investigation.

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Representative Hatton W. SUMNERS of Texas is vice-chairman of the Temporary National Economic Committee. Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and one of the most influential of old line Democrats in the House, his speech against the Supreme Court enlargement bill was one of the ablest made at either end of the Capitol. A fine jurist, well schooled in judicial procedure, Mr. Sumners should be of special value to the committee on questions of legal and legislative procedure. The two other House members of the Economic Committee are Carroll REECE, Republican of Tennessee, a former director of the School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance of New York University, and Edward Clayton EICHER, Democrat of Iowa, a member of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Both are competent legislators, though neither ranks among the recognized leaders of the House.

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE has six representatives from the executive agencies, and each has an alternate. Here we find the New Deal in complete control. The executive representatives inlude some of the New Deal's best brains. Among them there is little dissent to the general thesis that monopoly and monopolistic practises are a major cause of our present economic "unbalance."

Enforcement of existing anti-trust laws is mainly in the hands of the Department of Justice. Thurman ARNOLD, Assistant Attorney General in charge of its anti-trust division, is the Department of Justice representative on the National Economic Committee. A graduate of Princeton and former professor at the Yale Law School, Arnold is best known to the general public for his two books, "The Symbols of Government" and the "Folklore of Capitalism." Arnold hails from Wyoming. He has served as mayor of Laramie, and as a Democratic member of the State Legislature. Like other New Dealers, he has a flair for reform. The choice before us, as he sees it, is one between complete government control of business and an effective regulation of the system of private competitive enterprise. He believes that we can solve the problem and retain private enterprise within the scope of existing anti-trust laws. Among executive members of the anti-monopoly committee, Arnold seems headed for the most influential rôle.

William O. DOUGLAS, former university professor, and now chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, is the SEC representative on the committee. An outstanding New Dealer, Chairman Douglas is applying New Deal principles to the regulation of the country's financial markets. His alternate is his fellow commissioner, Jerome N. Frank, whose recent book, "Save America First," is looked upon as the most authentic exposition yet made of current New Deal aims and philosophy. To conduct its part of the examination of the American business structure, the SEC has set up a special monopoly unit. Its work will be directed by Thomas C. Blaisdell, formerly on the faculty of Columbia University, who for several years has headed the Social Security Board's division of research and statistics, and ranks high in the councils of the New Deal.

A former college professor and now general counsel of the Treasury Department, Herman OLIPHANT is the Treasury Department representative on the committee. Mr. Oliphant is generally credited with the authorship of the corporate surplus tax. His alternate is Rear Admiral Christian Peoples, head of the Treasury Procurement.

As enforcer of the Clayton Act, the Federal Trade Commission will provide much factual material for the committee, bearing on the long struggle between competition, and the efforts of certain groups to restrain it. Chairman Garland FERGUSON is the FTC representative on the committee. His alternate is Commissioner Ewin Davis. The two will direct the work of a large corps of FTC experts.

The Department of Commerce representative is Richard PATTERSON, newly appointed Assistant Secretary of Commerce, and former vice-president of the Columbia Broadcasting Company. His alternate is Robert Nathan, expert on trade associations. Dr. Willard Thorp will direct many of the Commerce Department's studies. A well-known economist, Dr. Thorp, for a short period, served as one of the early members of the Roosevelt "Brain Trust." In 1934, he was appointed director of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. The Senate Commerce Committee refused to approve the nomination, because Dr. Thorp had registered as a Republican when he was a professor at Amherst College.

The Department of Labor representative on the Economic Committee is Isador LUBIN, head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and a recognized authority in his field. His alternate is A. F. Hinricks, the bureau's chief economist. With the help of other experts on their staff, they will study the effect of mergers and machines on labor, both as to wages paid and the cost of living, the comparative position of employees of big and little business, and employment opportunities in competitive and monopolistic fields.

Leon Henderson, the man who predicted the new depression more than a year ago, is the Economic Committee's executive secretary. He will give his full time to his duties, and is expected to play an important part in shaping the course of the investigation. Mr. Henderson belongs in the inner circle of White House economic advisers. In a speech on January 1 which is believed to reflect the President's views he said:

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> What happened to recovery is plain. There just was not enough purchasing power in the hands of the mass of the people to buy the full output of farms and factories. This deficit was due chiefly to the fact that prices had been rising faster and longer than wages. Were monopolies responsible for this price rise which crippled workable relationships in the American economy by reducing the general public's capacity to consume? My answer is emphatically "Yes." I believe the "unbalance" in prices was touched off by monopolistic prices. Not all prices began their rise in August, 1936. Far from it. In the main, the price increases occurred in those commodities for which some group, public or private, or both, is deliberately manipulating output and prices. Inadequate purchasing power is the central reason for the slump, and the causes of the decline in purchasing power are to be sought in price manipulations, and the concentration of ownership which makes monopoly possible over wide and strategic areas. The blunt truth is that a large part of the American economy is no longer competitive, though not all the rigidity, by all means, is due to private controls.

Though representation on the committee is equally divided between Congress and the executive agencies, the administration clearly has the upper hand. It enjoys two big advantages. Of the $500,000 voted by Congress, $400,000 was given to the executive and only $100,000 to the committee. Through various government departments and other agencies, the administration can thus conduct many separate inquiries, aimed to focus public attention on various aspects of the concentration of economic power. As its second big advantage, the administration can utilize existing staffs of federal agencies. Many of the New Deal's bright young men are now busily engaged in exploring the operations of big business, and assembling facts and figures for the committee.

In its congressional representation, the committee lacks geographic balance, for the congressional group contains no members from a state east of Tennessee. With the exception of Asssistant Secretary of Commerce Patterson, none of the committee's twelve members have a background of recent business experience. In defending its present-day operations and organizations, big business must chiefly rely therefore on such public hearings as the committee, in its discretionary authority, may later decide to hold.

THAT the administration is determined to explore the problem of monopolies in all its many phases is evident from the scope of the inquiries which have been launched this summer. The Department of Justice will review its experience with the anti-trust laws during the last quarter of a century. The Securities and Exchange Commission has undertaken a survey of the extent to which financial devices, interlocking directorates and so on are used to limit competition. It will also examine the life insurance business, to find out how insurance companies invest their funds, and what control they exercise over other enterprises. The Department of Commerce has embarked upon a series of factual studies. It will devote particular attention to the effects of big business on our national economic structure. The Treasury will review the experience of the federal government as the world's largest purchaser of industrial products, and will tell the committee under what conditions, and from what industries, identical bids have been received. The Department of Labor will analyze the relationships between wages, prices and other labor, and employment stability in all lines of industry. The Federal Trade Commission will dip into its voluminous archives, to tell the committee in what part of the American economy prices and production are controlled, to what degree, and by what methods. Several federal agencies will join in a study of alleged monopolistic control of patents, and investigate charges that various industries have suppressed invention as a means of preventing competition. Later, the committee will embark upon other lines of exploration. The New Dealers will be in control of the investigation.

Preliminary reports will be issued from time to time and these will deal with various aspects of the concentration of economic power. Eventually the committee may recommend legislation to bring big business under somewhat the same type of federal control that the Securities and Exchange Commission now exercises over financial exchanges and the capital market.

Discussion of possible legislation at this time is premature. The job of the Economic Committee is essentially one of fact-finding. Members of Congress have varying views as to monopolies, and Congress will be under no compulsion to accept the legislative recommendations of the National Economic Committee.

City Autumn

This is no new,
No singular infection,
That green is prone to;
But an old disease
Inherent in the spring.
There is no correction
For such a fever
Fallen on the trees,

Here in the city
Autumn is a wasting,
A draining of color,
A substance thinned,
A tarnish—a dejection,
And a tasting
Of rust—
A final leaning on the wind.

ANNE BLACKWELL PAYNE.

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Progress for Catholic Schools?

By CLARA C. GLENN

Miss Glenn continues the discussion of Catholic school policy in meeting new developments and demands of the day, by registering reservations in the acceptance of the program described in the September 23 COMMONWEAL *by Frances G. Sweeney in her article, "A Catholic Progressive School."*

THE WORD "progressive" requires a point of reference, and nowhere a more exact one than in a discussion of education. That point does not seem to be supplied in the article, "A Catholic Progressive School," in THE COMMONWEAL of September 23. Rather, the term is appropriated in much the same fashion as in a good deal of the literature of the educational movement calling itself progressive, where it usually begs the question beautifully. Without questioning in any particular the excellence of the work accomplished at the school under discussion in the article, one would like to question, from the standpoint of the ordinary teacher in the classroom, some of the author's assumptions anent the "basic philosophy underlying the work" and the practises resulting from that philosophy. Particularly does one essay the task since the author intimates that Catholic schools are somewhat at fault in not sensing the essential harmony between their own philosophy and the educational principles and techniques she proceeds to outline. She writes:

> If Catholics could but see that the philosophy of life which they possess has inherent within it the highest goal of education, namely, the harmonious development of the physical, intellectual, volitional and spiritual powers of the individual, there would be no quarrel with those educators who make a plea for the education of the "whole child."

I do not know that Catholic philosophy has much concern, aside from a proverb or two, with the harmonious development of the physical powers; but granting that the ideal in life is the education of the "whole child," one can still question whether it is the business of the school to perform this whole job of education. The main business of the school is the development of the intellectual powers of the child, not of all the powers that he has. School is a place for the training of the mind, principally and foremost. Such at least is the common interpretation of the word. One knows immediately, for instance, what a parent means when he say that his Tommy is no scholar; Tommy submits with difficulty to the efforts of the school to train his mind. Again, a man whose physical powers are highly developed, whose will is firm under stress, whose habits are set in goodness and piety, but whose intellect has received little training, we may say is unschooled, or even uneducated; and everyone knows what we mean. He has not been subjected to the particular kind of discipline that schools are supposed to give. Not that the mind may not be trained outside of school; but inside the school unless this particular activity is engaged in principally, the institution does not deserve its name. This is not to say, of course, that any other sort of activity supersedes the "spiritual" in importance, if by "spiritual powers" the author means in general those powers of the soul which are exercised in the knowledge and love of God. The knowledge of God is the highest exercise of the human intellect, and since it is the work of the school to train that intellect, the school stultifies itself if it neglects to exercise the minds of its students on God. But the prime purpose of the school remains—the training of the mind.

I make the point because it seems to me to be the traditional Catholic view of the function of the school, and the view of many Catholic and Catholic-minded thinkers today, and because the true definition kept in mind is far more likely to be productive of "progress" in education than are generous theories embracing impossible tasks. What happens when the true purpose of the school is lost sight of is often, I believe, sentimentality in technique and confusion in organization of studies. For instance:

> Some teachers are primarily technicians, interested in getting results through the "drilling in" process, while others give first consideration to human personality and its development. Those in the latter category adapt themselves more easily to the many demands made in the progressive school.

I hold no brief for the technicians, the "drillers in," though I believe that their life will be long in the land that the Lord will give them; but at least they have somewhere in the backs of their heads a fairly clear idea of their job, and that idea is that the particular aspect of human personality which they are charged with developing is the mind, and since the mind exercises itself with difficulty, they must devise ways and means—technique—to exercise it. This is not "new procedure," it is true; it is as old as the hills. How is the "new procedure" superior to it—wherein the "progressive teacher" is contrasted to the technician, the progressive teacher giving first consideration to "human personality and its development"? How can such an ideal of the teacher's office, presented, let us say, to teachers in training, do anything but

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confuse and weaken their approach to classroom tasks? What is a good teacher anyway but a resourceful, imaginative technician?

It is chiefly in its implications in regard to the content of instruction, however, and the emphasis to be placed on the various parts of that content, that the article gives false pointers to the Catholic school. It states that while the school under discussion retains the

> . . . best of the cultural heritage of the past . . . socially significant material [it has] enriched and widened the content through the use of a variety of experiences, and recognizes the need for looking forward rather than backward. More attention is given to the study of current social and economic conditions than in the average school program.

The school looks forward to what, and for what purpose? And wherein has the traditional school erred in looking backward? If the paragraph means merely that in the study of the past, correlations are made with the present in a degree necessary to illustrate that study, one cannot quarrel with it, but only ask what teacher worth his salt has ever failed to make obvious correlation for illustration of his subject. The mediocre teacher—"traditional" or "progressive"—usually fails to clarify his subject. But if the paragraph means, as from its context it seems to, that the transmission of the cultural heritage, which the traditional school has been mainly concerned with, is subsidiary to the study of current social and economic conditions, or that it shrinks in importance to the level of "a variety of experiences," then one can of course quarrel with it.

The paragraph echoes fairly accurately the current tendency to lighten the discipline of the traditional subjects in the curriculum, to duplicate in the school the "experiences" of life outside of school, and above all to emphasize, at the expense of the study of the past, a factual examination of the social and economic conditions of the ephemeral scene. The principles at stake in departing from the traditional disciplines and emphases have been defended by those able to defend them. I will mention in passing only a few such defenses: Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes's address to the National Council for Social Studies three years ago, decrying the serious social effects of substituting "social studies" for the full and detailed study of history; Assistant Superintendent Tildsley's impassioned denunciation of these practises before the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1936; and President Hutchins's missionary work in teaching the basic aims of education. Again what is worth noting here is that the concurrence of thought among Catholic educators has usually been in favor of thorough discipline in the traditional culture.

Papal encyclicals on current social questions, and the magnitude and urgency of current social problems, have of course nothing to do with the question. The point is that the wisdom of the past, and the wisdom engendered by the ability to discern habitually the existence of the past in the present, are necessary equipment for the student before he can even intelligently survey current problems, much less solve them. And the more thorough the acquisition of that wisdom, the better able he is to act. This is the reason for the traditional school's looking backward, as a child looks up and backward to the face of his father for direction before going forth alone. Children in school are not called upon to deal with "current conditions"; they have been put into the school that it may prepare them for intelligent participation in adult life, that it may broaden and sharpen their intellects by acquaintance with the past and the great thoughts of the past.

It would seem that the schools of the day, hysterical over the present social collapse in the adult world—pointing as it surely does to defects in education—have thought to right matters by transporting the whole mess of knotty problems into the classroom. How will the blind lead the blind? The teacher can perhaps, in a measure, recognize, catalogue, propagandize in regard to, those problems, but such a technique educates no one in the art of using his mind and the accumulated wisdom of his forebears in the management of conditions existing when he arrives at activity.

The current stumbling-block to the progressive revisionists is the logical presentation of subject-matter within the boundaries of the several categories of learning—mathematics, language, literature and the rest. The curriculum should be organized in some other way—around the basic needs of man, let us say. We will list these as six or seven, and then in teaching any one—food, for instance—we will pick and choose from this field of learning and that, from agriculture to literature and the fine arts, the parts that will fit into our discussion of food. Or the curriculum will be organized around certain phases of experience, the "major social functions," and the various fields of learning will be chopped and trimmed to fit into these—about which one can only say that even the catalogue of them is extremely dull.

We will examine too the actual experiences of children; experience is the current magic word. Children write letters, for instance. We will first determine, by reference to the exhaustive researches of graduate students, what kind of letters children write most frequently. Discovering that they are most literary in answer to radio ads, we proceed to show them how to write answers to radio ads. And we will insinuate into this "unit" the force of the gerundive in attaining conciseness of expression, as in the unit on telephone conversation a week ago we covertly taught the infinitive in apposition, the children up to that time knowing

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neither the gerundive nor the infinitive from a giraffe. If we find, however, as the research workers have found, that the imps under our charge write least often the note of thanks, we will forthwith exercise them in the words of gratitude, sneaking in now—what shall it be?—ah! we will cheerfully teach that the children may, if they wish, say: "It looks like I owe you a letter." Current usage allows it. We look forward rather than backward. Says THE COMMONWEAL article:

> The realities of the situation are being faced by examining what the children do outside of school and then attempting to help them do desirable things better, or substitute other lines of activity for undesirable ones.

In reality, the effort to break down the traditional boundaries of subject-matter is the craze for correlation reduced to the absurd in elementary and high-school education. Children are given abstract problems requiring correlation and synthesis of materials which they have never been thoroughly taught in their own context. Children are to use as familiar tools, certain facts or instruments of thought with which they are as yet unacquainted. The completion of the "problem" set them (a problem, for instance, such as the effect of inventions upon living) must wait upon the teaching of the various bits of mathematics, geography or literature which are called for in the discussion or which can possibly be dragged into the discussion. The situation reminds one of novices in music ignorant of their scales who would be set to play parts in a symphony, or of engineers put to build bridges and taught their trigonometry as they went along. The curriculum of the progressive school

> . . . recognizes these categories [the subject-matter of the traditional school] for what they are, namely, convenient classifications of materials upon which to draw in dealing with problems. Their real value to the child rests in his ability to see their bearing on the problems he is trying to solve.

That the child sees the value of the problem is assumed; I doubt it. But I doubt still more that the ancient fields of human learning are of value to a little boy merely as convenient classifications of materials upon which to draw in solving his problems. I pass over Newman's great sentence on knowledge as a worthy end in itself. I call to mind only the eager, tense face of a child as his mind follows step by step, falters, anticipates, and then is led again, from difficult to more difficult and to more difficult still, in the logical unfolding of an idea; and I do not believe that statement.

> If one cared to dissect what one had listened to [in a class summarization of findings on the problem of transportation affecting life] one would find that elementary sociology, economics, science, history and geography had all entered into the picture and played a part in furnishing the data used in the discussion.

So he would. And after that, if the fifth-grader can only dissect each discussion and fit together the parts of sociology, economics, science, history and geography, he will no doubt at the end of his course have these materials back in convenient classifications so that he can draw on them later in dealing with problems.

I dislike THE COMMONWEAL article because it proposes as desirable for Catholic schools principles and techniques all too suspect in the educational world in general. One does not progress merely by changing, and to argue "necessary social changes" and stress the opportunity of Catholic schools to participate in them is to beg the question once again. It may be that a return to some of the traditions that we have cast aside would be truer progression than a continued discarding of them. More than one non-Catholic educator has accused us of forsaking our traditions, for we do not produce scholars. In the face of that accusation, the following sentence in a discussion of progress is overpowering:

> Then, too, the day has its darker moments when every fifth-grader must struggle with his spelling list, practise his penmanship, try to improve his arithmetic, and learn to read more effectively.

Which is to say—overlooking the spelling and penmanship—that for a few moments in this progressive day, a lad is exercised on the essentials of education. And so we have not got so far along after all; the road to learning is as unroyal as ever; but the journeying thereon has at least been reduced to a small portion of the day.

If the charge against us of poor scholarship is true, as it is of American schools generally, some of the causes at least are clear to teachers struggling against impossible odds. Improvement is not likely to come, however, through calling words — "new" and "old" — through growing increasingly vague as to aims and technique, teaching "broader areas of content," obliterating the logical divisions between fields of learning, and shifting the emphasis in study to the contemporary scene!

Want of Wit

The wise, since earth's dim morning,
  In concert all approve
The sad, disheartening warning:
  Tell not your love.

Let silence be commended,
  Or even telling lies—
Never have I pretended
  That I am wise,

Who show my hopeless aching,
  And openly admit,
Were other proof yet lacking,
  My want of wit.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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Canada's Uncle Sam

By FRANCIS FLAHERTY

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S assurance of United States support in the event of an attack on Canada by a non-British power has been received with mixed feelings in Canada. No question is raised as to the President's good intentions or the good-will of the American people but some misgivings are felt as to the ultimate implications of his policy should circumstances ever call for its application. In essence the misgivings arise from a sense of the moral principle that every right involves an obligation.

Prime Minister Mackenzie King apparently sensed this aspect of Mr. Roosevelt's definition of the good neighbor policy as applied to Canada and, two days after the President's speech at Queen's University, took an opportunity to acknowledge a return obligation, expressed in terms which implied no suggestion of a limit on Canadian sovereignty and which indicated a strong desire to avoid any actual dependence on military aid from outside Canada.

> We, too, have our obligations as a good and friendly neighbor and one of them is to see that, at our own instance, our country is made as immune from attack or possible invasion as we can reasonably be expected to make it and that, should the occasion ever arise, enemy forces should not be able to pursue their way either by land, sea or air to the United States across Canadian territory.

Despite sharp cleavages in opinion and sentiment most Canadians share a pride in their country's political independence. Any suggestion that external pressure is being applied to the determination of political issues in Canada provokes a sharp reaction, particularly if the pressure happens to come from the big neighbor to the south.

An unguarded remark by President Taft in 1911 to the effect that economic union between Canada and the United States through the reciprocity treaty then under debate would lead to political union gave rise to the most potent battle cry any Canadian party has yet evolved, "No truck or trade with the Yankees." It led to the defeat of the government which negotiated the treaty and the rejection of an arrangement now regarded as equitable and economically sound.

Only recently Mitchell Hepburn, Premier of Ontario, was able to capitalize the same sentiments and win an election on a promise to keep the CIO out of Ontario. The campaign was successful, not because the voters were anti-labor, but because the ruling authorities in the CIO were in the United States and made no secret of their political affiliations and aims.

So it is not surprising that many Canadian commentators ask whether a guarantee of American aid in war may not involve an implied protectorate by the United States and some influence from Washington on Canadian policies, at least in the sphere of international relations.

If the United States is ready to defend Canada against invasion it may seek to keep Canada out of quarrels which, in American eyes, seem mischievous or trivial. If Great Britain became involved in a war which was unpopular in the United States, some future administration at Washington might politely but firmly advise Canada to remain neutral in order to avoid the risk of attack and consequent American intervention. In effect the United States would instruct Canada to withdraw from the British Empire. For although the Empire tie imposes no obligation on Canada it is doubtful if it could last long if Canada remained at peace with Great Britain's enemies.

Carrying the speculation a step further the question arises as to what would happen if the United States did send a body of troops to Canada to repel an invader. Would there not be a danger of the troops remaining in Canada after hostilities ceased? Would not the stronger ally assume a measure of control over the affairs of the weaker during the conflict which it would be reluctant to relinquish?

From these considerations arises a certain distaste on the part of Canadians for the necessity of depending on American assistance in defense of Canadian territory, however welcome the assurance of assistance may be from the point of view of security.

Recent world events have driven many Canadians to change their views as to the position of their country in relation to the rest of the world, shattered long-cherished ideals and brought to life latent feelings of imperial patriotism. Until their influence Canadian opinion on the subject might have been roughly divided into three schools, one shading into the other but yet distinct.

One might be termed imperialist in that it favored a united British Empire under the leadership of Great Britain in foreign policy. This school believed in military preparedness and felt Canada should either make a money contribution to the maintenance of imperial forces or maintain adequate forces on its own account in close contact with British forces.

Another might be termed the collective security school and included those who looked to the League of Nations as the world's hope for en-

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during peace. It was opposed to military preparations and somewhat suspicious of British foreign policy. It believed Canada should steer clear of Empire commitments and follow an independent course within the framework of the League.

The third might be called isolationist or North American. It looked with suspicion on both League and Empire ties and was not enthusiastic about defensive preparations, believing the power and prestige of the United States would keep invaders away from Canadian shores providing the country kept out of affairs on other continents.

Naturally the collective security school suffered the most severe jar when the impotence of the League became apparent. It lost prestige rapidly to the imperialist school and collective security enthusiasts who had been unwilling to follow British leadership in peace appeared willing to follow it in war.

The rapidity with which the opinions of important groups may change was demonstrated at the recent annual convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Records of the congress are replete with resolutions denouncing war and imperialism and expressing labor's unwillingness to fight. Yet despite the warnings of a few leaders about conscription of man-power the congress unanimously passed a resolution urging full co-operation on the part of Canada with other democratic nations in whatever steps may be necessary to "end the reign of terror being imposed by Nazi and Fascist dictatorships."

Now that the imperialist school has been swelled with new recruits there would seem to be no doubt Canada will support Great Britain in any conflict which arises out of German expansion. It is doubtful if war would bring about an invasion of Canadian territory unless Great Britain were vanquished at sea, though any power fighting Great Britain would attempt, if possible, to stop the movement of food, munitions and men from Canada across the Atlantic. Such hit and run raids on Canadian coasts and shipping, however, would not call for the intervention contemplated by President Roosevelt.

In any event Canada's present defense policy is to provide adequate protection for ports and coastal areas against raiders. The Canadian defense department obtained appropriations for the establishment of coastal defense works and for increasing naval and air strength two years ago and is pushing on with its program as rapidly as equipment can be purchased and men trained.

The Little House in the Valley

By WILLIAM BROWN RYAN

THE GARDEN HOSE was what finally put a stop to the whole thing. Until we remembered that we would have to buy a garden hose, our *irreducible minimum house* had seemed plausible and well within our means. But all of a sudden we realized that the whole thing was out of our reach, and on top of the two-fifty for the hose mounted dollars for paint, pennies for a laundry basket, more for a hammer, a saw, nails, a mailbox and all the other things our minimum house would need. We had felt so confidently that we would be able to rent a dilapidated little place there in the Valley, very cheaply, and that by using a little ingenuity and a lot of thrift we would eventually have the makings of a home.

We had been scouring the Valley for just such a place when a tire blew out. This emphasized the need of a jack and tire tools, and finally led to a discussion of the actual need of a car—whether we should continue to pay thirty dollars a month for it, or should trade it off on an old car that was clear. The present car won, maybe because we liked it, but mostly because we knew how bad cars can be when they are old. And California has a way of spreading out beyond the horizon so that if one would live cheaply, one must drive to work. Our vision of living within our means called for rooting down into the fertile Valley soil, twenty miles away from the job and high rents. An old car won't stand forty miles a day for very long.

So the thirty dollars would have to be paid each month. Then came the rent — twenty-five more. We knew that if we could get an option to buy our little house, and by some gracious act of God could raise a down payment, the monthly outlay for housing would be less. But that was not for now.

So the thirty and the twenty-five added up to fifty-five. Then we would need a washing machine. It would cost us five dollars every month and the stove would be five more. We had planned at first on getting an old ice box for nickels. But it gets hot in the Valley, and ice would cost us as much as our electric refrigerator—five dollars every month. This brought the bill to seventy dollars.

Furniture would come later. We had two army cots and a deck chair that would have to do for a while. If anyone came to see us, we thought they would understand why they had to sit on boxes. But we were going to start cleaning up and painting right away, which would cost us five dollars a month more, making a total of seventy-five dollars before we had even bought anything to eat.

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Most couples plan on a dollar a day for food. But we could do better than that, we thought. Our little half-acre would furnish us with vegetables, after a while, and we could probably keep the food bill down enough—say, to twenty dollars. But that raised the total of our little column of figures to ninety-five.

Then there would be car expenses—fifteen dollars a month because of the distance. But closer in, rents were higher and ate up this much money, and closer in, one didn't get to start from scratch as we planned. Optimistically, we figured in fifteen dollars more, bringing the total to a hundred and ten. The typewriter (and one must have a typewriter to make a living) was five more. . . .

When our total got that high we talked for a long time, for our income wasn't far over the hundred mark. We juggled, and slipped down below the irreducible minimum a couple of times, but made no noticeable saving. We dispensed with movies, new books, trips to the beach. But they hadn't been figured in anyhow. Neither had the dentist, the doctor, the insurance.

That was why, when we realized we would have to buy a garden hose, and a lawn mower, hammer, saw, nails, a clothes line, the whole ideal suddenly seemed impossible—just as impossible as it had first been simple and logical. And we realized that when this year ended, we would again have spent most of our money for rent.

The future, which had given promise of rosy dawns and clear, peaceful nights beneath ageless pepper trees, suddenly resolved into an apartment for "adults only," later into a scrubby little house that didn't carry such a sign. Only the rent would be higher for the lack of it.

That is why, when we came home, we were dispirited and unable to look at the copy of *Life* which had suggested a cosy little house for an income of $2,000. Suddenly, we realized what a hundred and twenty a month equals in a year. We knew how many other people with incomes such as ours, would smile when they saw that little house in *Life,* and would start making happy, optimistic lists, and columns of figures. We hoped that they would not be disappointed as we were.

And as suddenly, the great, vaunted American Standard of Living began to seem a mythological thing to us who were willing to go so far below it to attain it. The little house, all ramshackle but basically sound both structurally and architecturally, seemed humble enough at first. But now we knew it was not humble enough. Yet so great was our longing for it that everything which stood in our way of attaining it seemed extravagant. The washing machine, we thought, would keep us young and able to work in the garden, where we could grow our food and become strong in the California sun. The refrigerator cost no more than the food which would spoil without it or the ice it would replace. The stove, too, was a simple necessity, in the class with the rifle the pioneer carried over those sierras a hundred years ago.

We thought of ourselves as having the same spirit as the pioneers—a strength of spirit with a desire for domesticity that would prompt us to substitute army cots for the landlord's Simmons.

Over in the corner of our minds now there is a smallish, heterogeneous pile of strange-looking "household goods." Mostly second hand, with an intersprinkling of home-made tables and, of course, the gleaming white of the stove, the washer and the refrigerator, it is to us very much like a pile of old Christmas cards which were so much fun to receive but made such a litter afterward. And when we think of the future, of our home, or of ourselves, our thoughts must walk gingerly through our minds, because that pile is there.

Yet, if we should sweep it out, as we would the Christmas cards, we would leave only emptiness, which young married people do not want. They want busy-ness—with ramshackle houses and army cots if necessary, but busy-ness. They want to live days that will lead to tired evenings when they can sit down for a moment under those old pepper trees, see how much they have done and be proud that they have done it. The ramshackle house is not old, to them, for they know how soon it will look new. They cannot see the scarred, flaking paint for the vision of dead white to come, with bottle-green shutters which can be made of old packing boxes and will look very nice in California. The ugly, tarpaper roof is an eyesore, but they explain ecstatically to visitors how it will look, as they are going to put cedar shingles over it, and how the strong summer sun will weather it to neutral, harmonious silver. The lawn looks better every week. Later, they are going to put in a sprinkler system and sow bent. That will give them as good a lawn as you'll find anywhere, but it will be a long time off, too, after the children are grown. Because children manage to tear up a lawn so. . . .

We grow tired and a little resigned, now, when we think of our little house in the Valley. For we are earning a living wage and living up to the great, vaunted American Standard of Living. Our next furnished apartment, for adults only, will have a tile bath. Later, the scrubby little house where children are allowed will not, and we will be even more tired and resigned. Because we will have moved, perhaps, several times between now and then — afraid of acquiring any permanency that does not root down beside our own hearth. Perhaps, in the next apartment, they will allow us to keep a dog. It will just be a mongrel pup, at first. But if we save our money for a month or two, we will be able to make the down payment on a Cocker Spaniel.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE FRONT pages of the newspapers have so long been almost exclusively given over to news of violence—wars and revolutions; China, Spain, Palestine, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and all the other trouble spots; labor wars, and political wars, and crimes, and exposures, and recriminations, and scandals, and assorted miseries—that to find on the front page of one of the great city journals, the New York *Herald Tribune,* on Monday, October 24, such a story as the dispatch from San Juan Capistrano, California, about the annual flight of what the newspaper reporter called "the miracle swallows," was an experience which must have given thousands of readers something like a shock of pleasure. It must also have caused many of them to wonder why it is that our press cannot more often report the things that happen in the world of peace and wonder and beauty, to keep their readers reminded of a truth which the bulk of the daily news tends to make us forget—the truth that under the surface of the stream of events occuring in the exterior world of violence and crime and sensational sex scandals, and the market-places of mammon, and of wars and rumors of war, which the press, and the radio, all too-faithfully report, there is that other, interior world which is far less well reported, but where, nevertheless, events are taking place that in substance are often far more important to humanity than the events which are the main stock-in-trade of our press and radio reporters and commentators. Events which are often comparable in their effect, when somehow, or some time, they do get reported, to those magic casements of the poet which open charmed vistas of vision into the world of spiritual beauty.

However, it usually requires a poet to report such happenings properly, and poets are not plentiful among the journalists and the radio commentators. Almost any writer or speaker can startle our attention, and shock our nerves, with his accounts of violent, or sinful, or freakish, or sensational things, or personalities; but few there are who can tell simple happenings or describe good people doing good instead of doing evil, or merely being foolish, in such a way as to thrill those who read or hear them, instead of making them yawn. For example, the other day the papers carried the account of a really gruesome event, telling about two youthful hoodlums who had tortured a little Jew boy by cutting the Nazi swastika into the flesh of his arm. It did not happen in Germany, or Austria, or Palestine; it happened right here, in the land of the free and the home of the brave. All sorts of horrible implications were attached to that newspaper story. It showed, for example, how the souls of children may be so poisoned by the propaganda of racial hatred now so virulent in all the world—perhaps imbibing it in their very homes—as to become like the souls of demons.

I do not say that such stories should not be published. On the contrary, since such things can happen, it is best to know the truth, and face up to it, and deal with it if we can. But everybody who knows what real human life is really like is aware that on the day when that sinister event took place, there were thousands and tens of thousands of boys and youths busily engaged in doing decent, kindly things; acts of affection among families, acts of moral stamina, even of moral or spiritual heroism. But unless some such action chanced to be objectively, and visibly, apparent in the form of some "news-worthy" event—and ordinarily such actions are anything but that—they do not get into the papers, still less "make the front page," that desired goal of all the frenetic publicity seekers of our publicity-perverted times.

The swallows of the San Juan Capistrano mission have become "first page" news, once a year, and are also reported by radio annually, because the press and publicity agencies somehow stumbled upon the rather obvious fact that human beings thrill to the wonders of nature—particularly when they seem to be connected, through legend and myth, with the even deeper wonders of the supernatural. Every year the swallows that nest in and about the old Franciscan mission in San Juan Capistrano fly away in a flock for some unknown winter home, probably in South America. Each spring, on the same day, they come back. The date of the autumn flitting is October 23; of the home coming in the spring, March 19. October 23 is, of course, the feast day of Saint John, or Juan, Capistran, patron of the mission, one of the greater names upon the long list of the Franciscan calandar. The Saint whose name is associated with March 19 is, of course, the Patron of the Universal Church, Saint Joseph.

The mysterious instinct that moves many kinds of birds in their migrations has been studied deeply by the naturalists, but never explained. The goings and comings of the birds of San Juan Capistrano have been recorded by the mission friars ever since the mission was established, in 1776, except for the time when there were no friars at the old mission; but even if the flights were not then recorded, they went on with the same regularity, as the traditions of the people of the neighborhood affirm. Anyhow, if Saint Francis won fame, as he did by preaching to the birds long centuries ago, the birds of San Juan are famous for the yearly sermon which they in their turn preach, without words, but through their chirpings and flutterings, transmitted through the microphone, or reported by the press. It is greatly to be desired that both press and radio will take the hint supplied by the episode, and seek for more good news of the same sort. There is plenty of it to be found if the will to find it, and the wit to recognize it, are not lacking; and they are not lacking; they are only left unemployed by most of us as we befog our minds and numb our souls with the ordinary news of the press and radio.

Communications

EUROPE'S FUTURE

Lancaster, Pa.

TO the Editors: Your October 21 issue is extremely interesting. It stirs me to these reflections:

I hope Mr. Donald Attwater ponders deeply the cartoon, "Peace, It's Wonderful!" Also Mr. Shuster's fine

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sentences: "The worst comes when surrender will seem sweeter than resistance. . . ."

To Mr. C. O. Cleveland I should like to repeat Winston Churchill's words: "People say we ought not to allow ourselves to be drawn into a purely theoretical antagonism between Nazidom and democracy, but the antagonism is here, now."

I rejoice over Monsignor Ryan's last paragraph. These many years we have been sitting "with folded hands," reiterating the obvious: "For all the fine phrases, nothing permanent was accomplished by the World War." Of all people, Catholics should be the last to subscribe to the "success" cult.

To all Catholic pacifists I recommend the rereading of the chapter, "War of Gods and Demons," in Chesterton's book, "The Everlasting Man."

Mr. Michael Williams states a most important fact which I have seen expressed only once before in the Catholic press: "The latter onslaught [on the clergy in Spain] . . . is less of a menace to the Church than would be the continued growth of the Nazi idolatry and its satellite, the Fascist state fanaticism." The editor of the *Catholic World* expressed the idea in October: "The devil we do know is less dangerous than the devil we don't know."

Finally, I confess I am wearied with the complaints that our democracy is only a plutocracy in disguise. Grant the worst, for the sake of argument. Is it not a matter of more vital concern to us whether any vestige of democracy is going to be left in the world, to be improved?

MARGARET J. WINDOLPH.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: It is rather depressing how much Chamberlain's policy is misunderstood, even by such a clever observer as is Mr. George N. Shuster. We have to consider English tactics from the viewpoint of the Empire, not from a merely European discussion. Chamberlain is neither a "Cunctator" nor a "tired old man," but a sober realist and irreproachable patriot, who has not only to protect the fifty millions of the British Isles, but the more than five hundred millions of the Empire.

England is not able to repel at one time the dangers challenging the Empire in these days of racial and social trouble throughout the world. Therefore it was Chamberlain's aim to shorten the front of London's defense. Japan stands *ante portas* at Hong Kong, Britain's stronghold in China. The Arabs are in revolt about Jewish immigration to Palestine. Both are much more serious problems for the Empire's future than was the German irredenta in Czechoslovakia. Chamberlain at his arrival in his homeland waved the England-German pact like a trophy—not only because it meant peace in the North Sea and revealed the hope of settling the Mediterranean difficulties by a Four-Power-Agreement on Spain, but because it gave England the chance of concentrating her navy in the Pacific and further to cut down the Palestine disorders.

It is not Chamberlain's business to fight for the Czechs or the Jews, for abstract principles or public sentiment, but he feels bound to prevent by all means the collapse of His Majesty's Empire—a viewpoint evidently strange to Americans whose splendid isolation allows them to mingle foreign policy with doctrinary idealism. The triumph of the Japanese in China as well as the Bolshevization of China might both include the end of British domination in Asia. For protecting his country's world influence England had to pay a price in Europe. It will prove worth while if it enables the Britons to maintain their position in the Pacific world.

Though Chamberlain's aim is strictly British—not at all humanitarian or cosmopolitan—the system of the world will remain more liberal with the blowing-up of the German-Japanese alliance and the full maintenance of the Empire, which is hindering the accomplishment of the totalitarian principle throughout the world.

C. O. CLEVELAND.

Lisle, Ill.

TO the Editors: Reading your article of October 21, entitled "Mr. Chamberlain's Dove," one cannot but admire the frankness and fairness with which you present the facts of the greatest world's crisis in Central Europe.

Furthermore, you are to be highly commended for the assertion of the fact that "the only two places in all Europe where minorities were decently treated were Czechoslovakia and the Weimar Republic." Some of our Catholic weeklies and journals should take notice of this, since it comes from a disinterested first-hand observer.

REV. WENCESLAS MICHALICKA, O.S.B.

DEMOCRACIES AND WAR

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In his letter in the October 14 issue, Thomas Barry doubts that America is now a democracy but thinks that America was a democracy in Lincoln's day. He also states: "'Democracy' isn't a cure-all of political and economic ills, liberal propaganda notwithstanding." I have been looking into the subject for some time, and I am convinced that the United States is not and never was a democracy—not even in George Washington's time. Also I am convinced that real democracy *is* a cure-all for economic and political ills.

The first sentence in Genesis reads: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." If God created the earth, then all God's children have equal right to its use. True democracy is simply the putting into actuality of the God-given right of all his children to sit at his table.

The seed of poverty was not planted in President Hoover's administration but in 1607 with the first English settlement of Virginia. A reading of colonial history throws much light on our present economic ills. In "The Memorial History of the City of New York," by General James G. Wilson, published in 1892, I find the following illuminating statements:

"It furnishes a comic element in history to trace the easy assurance with which kings of this early age bestowed whole empires of wild lands upon relatives or dependents and fixed title to property to which they themselves had no possible right."

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The "Duke of York in June, 1664, conveyed what is now the state of New Jersey to two court favorites, Sir George Carteret and Lord Berkeley."

"Maryland, Maine, New York, Carolina, Pennsylvania, were all founded by proprietors to whom the king made grants of land, generally a reward for political or personal service. . . . They were generally feudal and aristocratic in type though modified by the environment and social forces of a new country."

Summarizing the reading of colonial history up to 1776, one finds that the best lands of the thirteen colonies had been parceled out in large holdings to the relatives and favorites of the royalty of England. Many of the poor settlers that came over, either became tenant farmers or took a chance of being killed by the Indians by settling on Indian land.

Before the American Revolution the large landholders, who constituted but a small percentage of the entire population, ran the country. The Revolution did not change this.

During George Washington's administration as first President of the United States, New York City was the first capitol of the country. Of the social functions held, not one ragged continental who had fought in the Revolution was a guest. Those present at these functions were the great landed families such as: the Bayards, the Beekmans, the De Peysters, the Livingstons, the Van Cortlandts, the Van Rensselaers, etc.

In conclusion let me quote brief extracts from the "Debate in the Constitutional Convention on a basis of Representation," June 19 to July 5, 1787.

Alexander Hamilton: "The difference of property is already great among us."

Charles Pinckney, South Carolina, referring to the landed interests: "The latter is the governing power in America."

James Madison: "The landed interest, at present, is prevalent; . . . Landholders ought to have a share in the government, to support these invaluable interests, and to balance and check the other. They ought to be so constituted as to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority. The Senate, therefore, ought to be this body; and, to answer these purposes, they ought to have permanency and stability."

H. Ellenoff.

THE REVOLT AGAINST GOD

St. Paul, Minn.

TO the Editors: It is to be hoped that those readers who are enthusiastic about the articles by Bishop Lucey, "Are We Fair to the Church?", in The Commonweal of September 9 and 16, will read and ponder the more penetrating article of E. I. Watkin, "The Revolt against God," in The Commonweal of September 30.

We are indebted in gratitude to both these contributors, and all the more so when their articles are read in conjunction. Mr. Watkin's article, however, is the one that goes to the root of the problem.

Rev. William Busch.

Points & Lines

Wages and Hours

THE WAGES AND HOURS LAW, one of the few over-all labor laws for the whole country, came into operation October 24 with surprisingly little fanfare. The Associated Press sums up the Act:

> Wages—A minimum wage of 25 cents an hour until October 24, 1939; a minimum of 30 cents an hour for the next six years; a minimum of 40 cents an hour thereafter. Industry committees may recommend, and the administrator may order, that the minimum be increased more rapidly in a given industry.
>
> Hours—A maximum work week of 44 hours the first year, 42 the second and 40 thereafter. Employment over these maxima must be paid in cash at the rate of time and a half the regular wage.
>
> Child Labor—Employment of children: (1) under 16 in any occupation is prohibited except in cases other than manufacturing or mining, where the work will not interfere with schooling and health; (2) between 16 and 18 is prohibited in any occupation the Labor Department Children's Bureau declares hazardous or detrimental to health or well-being.
>
> Practically or Wholly Exempt—Seasonal industries, agriculture, executives, professionals, learners, apprentices, handicapped workers, seamen and workers in industries regulated by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The magazine *Business Week* goes further into administrative problems:

> Short of money, and with a staff of around 100 persons to do the work of 1,000, Administrator Elmer Andrews hopes that voluntary compliance will be the rule for those covered. He has cleared up many questions with interpretative bulletins and has divided the country into 12 administrative regions, with headquarters, as yet unmanned, in as many cities. Four regional heads are expected to be appointed within the next few days, one each for the West, the Lakes region, New England and the South with others following as fast as they can be selected. . . . Lack of adequate preparation, occasioned not by procrastination but by Congress's failure to appropriate more than $350,000, has forced Andrews to abandon temporarily his plans for industrial committees to set wage scales above the 25-cent minimum. Meanwhile, the textile committee is off to a good start under Chairman Donald Nelson. . . . Appointment of a tobacco committee is hanging fire temporarily. Preliminary negotiations are under way for appointment of committees in the shoe and garment industries, including dresses and shoes. Beyond these, no committee organization is expected this year. . . . As for policing and enforcement, Andrews expects to have 20 or 30 inspectors in the field by Monday (October 24), and possibly that many more in a few days.

It was generally realized that such a sweeping law could not get into operation without some real difficulties. The *Christian Science Monitor* noted:

> Difficulties for workers as well as advantages may flow out of the new law in the immediate period of adjustment. For instance, certain marginal employees may lose their jobs if companies feel that they are unable to meet the new conditions. The Western Union Company threatens to put out of work many of its messengers; and other employers may follow suit. All this makes for a period of uncertainty and confusion.

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The theory of the law was gone over when it was up in Congress, and some notes of that controversy reechoed in the papers and magazines when it was put into force. The *Times* reported Mr. Andrews's own broadcast the night before the inauguration of the law:

> He described the act as one of the pillars of a sound economic system and said it constituted part of the administrator's program to "irrigate our business and economic system by regularly infusing purchasing power into our channels of trade."

The law seems clearly to depend on the widely popular idea that capitalistic business is periodically slowed down primarily because of the uneven distribution of income, some few rich families receiving too much more than they spend on consumers' goods, thus leaving too many products with no one to buy them and thus investing excessively in productive capital goods which aggravate the underconsumption condition by throwing an increasing amount of consumers' goods on the market. The New York *Times* registers scepticism about the whole Wages-Hours law:

> From the economic standpoint this is one of the most important acts ever passed in our history as a nation. . . . It now remains to be seen whether this act will do on net balance more good than harm. The good that it does will be obvious and will receive a great deal of official publicity. . . . To what extent, for example, will the act create unemployment? There are important reasons for thinking that it will tend to do so. . . . This act represents one more great invasion by the federal government of powers previously exercised by the individual states.

The New York *Herald Tribune* thinks the act compares unfavorably with British practise:

> . . . Thus, the British have avoided the two major weaknesses of our own experiment—namely, its insincerity, which promises industrial dislocation and unemployment, and its encroachment on labor's self-reliance.

The St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* reiterates:

> As the *Post-Dispatch* said repeatedly during the debate on the measure in Congress, a law which does no more than this is obviously no cure-all, no panacea, no self-sufficient remedy for our economic ills. It does, however, do this: it writes as a stated public policy of the country that no person in a business subject to the regulation of Congress through its constitutional authority to control interstate commerce shall work for less than a subsistence wage. And doing this, it brings the force of the United States government on the side of exploited, unprotected groups.

James B. Cooney writes in the *New World,* Chicago archdiocesan weekly:

> Labor had better remember that even though some employers, large and small, are willing and even anxious to meet labor's just demands, they will be unable to do so if labor fails to strengthen the hands of those who are trying to legislate for social justice. The reason is simple. If high wages, short hours and good working conditions and social security are not compulsory, most industries which now do or are willing to do so, will be forced to meet the competition of lower cost production. Eventually they will either go out of business or they will adopt the same practise of social injustices as their competitors.

It has been widely pointed out, for instance by *Barron's:*

> Small plants, especially in small towns, apparently are going to be the ones to feel most heavily the effect of the wage minimum and hour maximum.

It is certain that the South will be the place most affected. This fact particularly pleases the A. F. of L., which says in its news service:

> The provision barring wage and hour differentials for any geographic area was one which the AFL insisted should be incorporated in the act.

The editorial then voices as its own the sentiment of Congressman Albert Thomas:

> The South has been literally bled to death for a number of years because of unskilled workers who were not organized and because they were not able to protect themselves. The wage and hour law will set right those sweatshops which have been pauperizing our workers.

The Baltimore *Sun* recognizes the effect on the South, but does not welcome it without reservation:

> 750,000 persons will have their wages raised, while 1,500,000 will have their hours shortened. . . . The 750,000 who are expected to benefit from the imposition of the 25-cent-an-hour wage are mostly in the South. Probably the majority of the 1,500,000 whose hours are to be shortened are found in the same region. . . . In brief, the new law seems destined to serve as an instrument for a redistribution of the sectional balance of economic power. Only if the South succeeds in accommodating itself to this redistribution without suffering serious industrial stoppages and unemployment can the act be expected to accomplish the humanitarian purposes by which it was professedly inspired.

English Catholics and Peace

ON THE whole the Catholic press in England welcomed the Munich agreement despite its shortcomings. Somewhat typical are the remarks of Douglas Jerrold in the *Catholic Herald:*

> It was Mr. Chamberlain's privilege to open the gates, for the first time in twenty years, to a new epoch in Europe. The gate led on to a difficult and uphill road, but it was the only possible road by which peace could have been and still can be reached.

Quite opposed to this general line is Hilaire Belloc, who writes in the *Weekly Review,* which recently merged with *G.K.'s Weekly:*

> The one outstanding fact is that England has suffered for the first time since the eighteenth century an open and decisive defeat. There will necessarily follow upon this capital episode further efforts by our rivals to share the foreign tribute we have hitherto commanded, to claim control over the key points of the world, which have hitherto been the monopoly of England.

In fact the *Weekly Review* has a solution all its own for the international situation that England is now facing. Replying to a charge that their editorial policy was inconsistent in advocating both domestic self-sufficiency and armed defense of colonial possessions, it maintains:

> As to our contention that we should make every attempt to preserve our foreign possessions by equipping ourselves with an adequate army, it is true that the system under which we live, whereby a great part of our wealth comes from abroad and often under conditions governed by industrial capitalism, is not the economic system which this paper supports; but on the point there are two things to be said: first, that the possessions do not necessarily imply the system; and secondly that to abandon through weakness and without the initiation of a new economy those possessions which at present constitute so much of our wealth would be both craven and disastrous.

Hilaire Belloc's "Now for the Army" is not the primary means most Catholic journalists suggest for meeting post-

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Munich conditions. The *Tablet* (London) intimates editorially with its customary suavity:

> We have inherited from the nineteenth century an Empire, a long catalogue of possessions, of very unequal significance and importance, a vast political system, which includes countries which are the settled homes of our race and therefore to be defended, and trading stations and coaling stations which were wanted at one time, but whose ownership is simply a matter of business, and means nothing apart from the preservation of particular forms of foreign trade.

Douglas Jerrold reaches a somewhat similar conclusion in the *Catholic Herald:*

> [Germany] reads into the hesitation and apologies of our government and the open hostility of the Opposition, a hardening of our temper and a growing resolution to organize another political system opposed to the fulfilment of those aims, which she, for her part, considers reasonable and just. . . . We cannot be expected as Catholics to welcome the extension of the power and the wealth of Herr Hitler's Germany with enthusiasm. . . . Since neither inaction nor active hostility can assist the cause of the Church in Germany, and since both must lead to war, it is surely our duty to refuse to support them. It follows equally that it is our duty to consider the positive obligations of an active policy of appeasement.

What this would mean in actuality is suggested by W. J. Blyton in the same paper:

> Applied Chrisitanity, indeed, is the toughest Real-politik mankind will ever know. To keep up human relationships is the one sure antiseptic and preservative, whether among persons or governments. Closely allied with this is our repeated historic failure to accord justice or recognition promptly, and at the time when it would have all the effect of making friendships. It is always stupid and costly to wait for the crisis and the push. "Agree with thine enemy while thou art in the way with him." Let settlements anticipate difficulty and disaster. Have we learned this lesson from the recent crisis? Or is the old inch-by-inch reluctance to be repeated in the case of colonial readjustments? We have the sense, most of us, to forestall difficulties in private life, by timely preventive action. Why not in vital public life?

The *Catholic Herald* apparently holds the view that Christian social conditions at home are the soundest means of keeping a nation out of war. Accordingly they propose a plan which, if carried out, should create conditions conducive to a popular will for peace.

> Nearly two million unemployed men and women who would have found work if the recent crisis had terminated in war instead of peace are at this moment faced by the blackest despair. There is every reason why they should be given work. None why they should not. . . . The *Catholic Herald* . . . invites the whole Catholic body, more aware perhaps than others of the moral and material evils of unemployment, under-nourishment, and under-housing, to support it in its determination to see to it that work and wages are provided for all who have capacity for work and the will to expend themselves for the good of their souls, their bodies and their country. . . . There is urgent need at present for increased effort in such national work as road building, slum clearance, real family housing, afforestation, land drainage, improving rural water supplies, and, above all, increasing good production by land and sea . . . a bold plan, inaugurated by the government, which shall at the same time restore purpose and health and dignity to the lives of our unemployed and guarantee our future solidarity and security in face of war, would certainly receive the enthusiastic support of the majority of the people.

The Stage & Screen

Knickerbocker Holiday

MAXWELL ANDERSON is at his best a dramatist of intellect and imagination, as he has shown in "Mary of Scotland," "High Tor" and "The Masque of Kings," but at times he is pedestrian and heavy-footed. He is this latter in "Knickerbocker Holiday." In fact the libretto of this, Mr. Anderson's first musical comedy, is at times distinctly elephantine, and reminds one of what used to pass for humor in the musicals of the very early days of the century, bringing back memories of Pixley and Luder's old operetta, "The Burgermaster." Its chief protagonist is sliver-legged Peter Stuyvesant, and it tells a story of a girl beloved of another, but betrothed by her father to Stuyvesant. Of course all ends happily, and the girl gets the boy of her heart. This is about all there is to the story, though at times Mr. Anderson injects rather vague satire on dictators and in honor of the true American who doesn't want to be bossed. This and a group of old-fashioned Dutch comedians, in the persons of the elders of New Amsterdam, furnish the humor. Fortunately Mr. Anderson chose for his collaborator Kurt Weill, who has turned out a score of unusual melodic charm and rhythmic effectiveness, and, for his Peter Stuyvesant, Walter Huston, whose homespun personality and incisive manner are both admirably fitted to what he has to do. Mr. Huston is well assisted by Richard Kollmar and Mark Smith, and by a chorus that knows how to sing. So at least those who like light music well sung will enjoy "Knickerbocker Holiday," even though their laughter may be restrained. (At the Ethel Barrymore Theatre.)

Knights of Song

THIS is entitled on the program "A Musical Excursion into the Lives of Gilbert and Sullivan," and it is just that, being neither a play nor a series of scenes from the operettas, but a combination of both. The operetta scenes are with the exception of the opening one from "Pinafore" only indifferently done, but the portions devoted to Gilbert himself and the singing of Natalie Hall are delightful. In fact the evening is a strange combination of the superlative with the banal. Nigel Bruce is Gilbert as he must have been, and given his own lines to speak he speaks them magnificently. In face and figure, in his lunging manner, and his lunging mordant wit, his is one of the finest impersonations of the season. Reginald Bach is also excellent as D'Oyley Carte, and Miss Hall's singing is of a high order. But unfortunately the author, Glendon Allvine, had to concoct a plot, and a very feeble one it is. He has given us chiefly hokum and hokum at times of exceedingly bad taste, especially in the scenes with Queen Victoria, Edward VII and Oscar Wilde. It is as if two distinct persons had written the Gilbert scenes and these. If only Mr. Allvine had stuck to history and recorded dialogue! And yet, all in all, the evening is a pleasant one, that is, if one can concentrate on

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the good and forget the bad. A more effective scene for the final one, than the knighting of Gilbert in a sort of Little Eva transformation scene, would be a rousing finale from one of the operas. (At the Fifty-first Street Theatre.) GRENVILLE VERNON.

Vanishing Ladies and Corpses

ENGLISH Alfred Hitchcock has sent over another of those little gems, "The Lady Vanishes." Winning no prize for originality of plot, this spy story even employs the old trick of conveying the code through music; but for attention to detail, for understatement at the right times, for suspense, for violent action, Mr. Hitchcock's direction is still tops. When the picture opens in a picturesque village in the Balkans, you just know that Dame May Whitty is someone more than the spinsterish governess, Miss Floy; and when she and Margaret Lockwood, after a flower pot has fallen on Miss Lockwood's head, mount the train for their long trip to London, you are sure that things are going to happen. They do. Miss Floy disappears. Mr. Hitchcock cleverly drops clues that his actors are slow to catch; and when you think you can't stand the delayed suspense any longer, furious gun-play starts. After you're breathless, Mr. Hitchcock sees to it that the British amusingly muddle through.

"The Mad Miss Manton" also gives you murder and mystery—but on the American and less subtle side. Barbara Stanwyck with a flock of dizzy and beautiful Junior Leaguers tries to bring Henry Fonda, representing the press, and Sam Levene, representing the police, down to earth when those two razz the girls once too often. Henry and Sam think the "dressmaker's dummies" are just pulling another fast one when the gals insist that a murder's been committed. The girls prove their point and bodies pop out of all unexpected places. After much scaring, screaming and laughter amidst displays of minks and ermines, the mystery is lukewarmly solved, and poor boy gets rich girl.

Vincent Price does all right in his first picture. Of course he has no opportunities to prove himself as he did on the stage in his Albert to Helen Hayes's Queen Victoria, but his fine voice and Greek profile are put to good use in "Service De Luxe," a slick, rather clever light comedy. Constance Bennett, wearing some of the most stunning clothes to be seen on the screen, and Helen Broderick run a personal service bureau that is successful in arranging everything for its clients — except when Connie wants her man. Charles Ruggles and Mischa Auer do well the same kind of thing they always do well; and "Service De Luxe," although it won't roll you in the aisle, will keep you pleasantly amused.

"Listen Darling" is a sort of penny Valentine affair about Freddie Bartholomew and Judy Garland who want to find a rich husband for Judy's mother, Mary Astor. Judy sings a couple of good songs and Freddie continues to use his beautiful, clipped English even when his voice cracks. Needless to say, the kids find their choice when Walter Pidgeon shows up. But the whole picture is a little too shiny and superficial; and its childishness inclines toward boredom. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Day

A Confused Man in a Confused World

The Letters of Lincoln Steffens. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. Two Volumes. $10.00.

THIS is an important book, partly because it gives us more from Lincoln Steffens. For in himself Steffens was important. He was the dean of American "muckrakers." In his own lifetime his "Autobiography" became a classic. It was a college text before he died. He was a really great reporter—a reporter who tried to understand what he saw. He even tried to do something about it. Behind the scenes he actively moved through American politics. Presidents and their advisers sought his advice. He was so influential, so respected, so trusted that he made friends of such men as "Boss" Croker and Martin Lomasney, the Boston political leader. More than that, he even persuaded J. B. McNamara to plead guilty in our first famous labor—the dynamite—case. He even got the judge and the owner of the dynamited building to agree to stop wholesale labor prosecutions. But the agreement did not stick, and Steffens knew permanent disillusionment. Some of these things are made clear in his "Autobiography." All of them are made clearer here in this correspondence.

But this book is a significant contribution to our historical knowledge. For it is bigger than Steffens. It is the confused story of a confused man in a confused world. His confusion is important. For here revealed in multifold ways is an unusually intelligent, alert human being, possessed of first-hand knowledge of many things. He does not know what to do with it. Both the knowledge and the confusion, however, may help us to understand not only Steffens but America.

Steffens is of special interest, too, to American Catholics. For he went to Mexico in 1915 to watch the revolution. He was close to Carranza. So close that "at his suggestion" the "decisive" Article 27 was put into the Mexican Constitution of 1917. This is certainly arresting news. His wife says that this incorporation marks his "triumphant peak" in political participation. She also suggests that he staved off war between us and Mexico. This is in a sense true—though even Steffens could not control a Villa. But only in a sense, for the Mexican Constitution was kept in abeyance until 1925. And we were closer to war in those days than most Americans realize. Not a little of the difficulty turned on Article 27. Harold Nicolson has told us of the achievement of Dwight Morrow in inducing a temporary economic and religious settlement. Even yet the whole implications of Article 27 have not been realized—the last drop of power over both American property and Mexican Catholics squeezed out. Catholics will not regard this as a "triumphant peak." Need I repeat? This *is* an important source of knowledge. If Steffens's influence in Mexico has been general knowledge before now, the present writer has been singularly unaware of it. (Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution contains clauses which permit expropriation of land held both by the Church and by foreigners. Those who wish may find the contentious Article 27 at page 144 of Beman's "Intervention in Latin America.")

Steffens also watched and reported the Russian Revolution. He observed Fascist Italy. But the Russian experiment left a permanent mark on his mind. This is every-

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where reflected in his correspondence. Steffens attended the Versailles Conference. He had intimate knowledge of most countries of Europe. Infinite capacity for friendship he must have possessed. For there come to visit him men ranging from James Cagney to Edward Filene. Splashed through the book is correspondence from his little son, correspondence from Colonel House. "Teddy" Roosevelt was his confidant. He knew Lenin. There is hardly any important figure who does not, somehow, get into the book. (The correspondence runs from 1889 to 1936.)

Sharply, often humorously, never cruelly, he has etched in comments on famous men. Here is Lincoln Steffens teaching Walter Lippmann how to write. The irritating and easily irritated Herbert Hoover is seen. Gompers is "the old crooked labor leader" (page 637). The elder La Follette appears as "a conservative; a real one" (page 676). Business men, whom Franklin Roosevelt tried to reform, are "cocky again"—"every time you put a little more feed into the trough, they try to get a few more of their pigs feet into it" (page 985).

I have said that the Russian Revolution left a permanent impression on his mind. Especially after 1929 communism broods omnipresent in all the correspondence. More and more, with lessening reluctance, he feels that for America communism is inevitable—communism is salvation. To Edward Filene he writes: "I have felt that there is little intelligence and no hope in your kind of men, the business hogs, except as by their narrow-mindedness they force on the revolution" (page 485). Again: "I am not a communist, but I am a follower of the labor movement into that party and into the revolution which the capitalists are making" (page 1007). He felt that Franklin Roosevelt was our last hope, but that he would fail because "business" would not help him save itself. "And just this time when craft unions are failing, the bosses bring up the company union. You'd think Soviet Russia had gone into the Chamber of Commerce to steer it to bring on the revolution" (page 1028).

What is important about this last phase is not, so much, that he was a communist. What is important is what made him one. Fundamentally it was his conviction that the possessors of economic power would not change. He tries to anticipate the charge that communism is dictatorship by writing that Russia "is the most absolute dictatorship ever seen," *but* the leaders "mean to change it later." This is naïveté. He forgot what Lord Acton reminds us of, that absolute power corrupts absolutely. When fighters for democracy like Steffens become disenchanted, tired liberals, the significance for us is that democracy must be or become more than a collection of symbols and phrases. Concentrated wealth or "big business" cannot revere the symbols and freeze in phrases the inequalities of our system. As Professor Whitehead remarks: "Those societies which cannot combine reverence for their symbols with freedom of revision, must ultimately decay either from anarchy or from the slow atrophy of a life stifled by useless shadows."

FRANCIS DOWNING.

CRITICISM

The March of Literature, by Ford Madox Ford. New York: Dial Press. $3.75.

THIS is no mere outline of literature though it is more ponderous in bulk than Mr. Wells's celebrated distortion of history. Nor is it one of those vast compendiums or anthologies such as crowd, like Titans never awakened, the library shelves reserved for comparative letters. It is a book, at once less commodious and more interesting—the ramblings, in more or less a straight line, of "an old man," as Mr. Ford says of himself, "made about writing." Its genesis was the author's impression (which we all share) that there is something abysmally wrong in the way that English and comparative literature are presented to the teeming populations of youth in our colleges. The all but universal distaste for the classics can usually be traced to the pedagogue. The cure, Mr. Ford intimates, is that, in teaching literature, it is not enough to love it; one must practise it like Mr. Ford himself.

This is an important affirmation which is pretty well justified by Mr. Ford's book though, personally, I should hate to use the latter in the classroom for anything but the most casual collateral reading. Although the volume proposes and maintains a certain plan, the complete absence of book, section and chapter headings makes for a certain chronological confusion from which the uninformed student might, to some degree, suffer. The ordinary reader, however, has only to glance at the first untitled chapter to see his path clearly through the rich forest and teeming meadows of Mr. Ford's mind. There were two streams of literary influence in the panorama of the ancient world. "The one descended the Nile, the other came from China, yet both discharged themselves into the Mediterranean to form that civilization which is today our own." It may be gathered from this sentence about sources that Mr. Ford is, in his esoteric fashion, as fiercely Romanesque in culture as Mr. Belloc himself. In fact the "Modern Side," as they say in British schools, suffers considerably in proportion here, compared to Latin classicism and Provençal poetry in both of which subjects Mr. Ford is an expert, particularly when some great figure from the Modern Side is "Nordic," to use Mr. Ford's reiterated word. This classical hostility is probably why he is so grotesquely unjust to Ibsen who, however Ultima Thulish, was also a great poet.

The book has inevitable limitations, one of which the author cheerfully concedes in his introduction: "I am writing only about the books that I have found attractive." Consequently Dante is treated cooly enough by Mr. Ford though he is paid the customary lip service. On the other hand, that sunset of the English Renaissance called in text-books the Caroline Age of Vaughan, Herbert, other Anglo-Catholics (usually so neglected by the pundits) is paid an unexpected tribute by Mr. Ford . . . "those cool, bright, Laudian days . . . with the fervent, as if domestic, love of the Redeemer who came lightly like lambent flame leaping upon the hills . . . those matchless years that have never returned."

It is when he comes to the Romantic Movement, under his self-imposed limitation, that Mr. Ford will probably exasperate a number of his readers. Scott happens to be one of those writers whom he does not find attractive so Scott is dismissed as a mere snob of letters, though he was not a whit more snobbish than Goethe and Chateaubriand whom Mr. Ford happens to admire. Speaking of Scott's loyal fondness for King George IV, Mr. Ford calls the latter "the lousiest monarch that ever disgraced a throne," and then goes on to talk of Byron's "backboneless ramblings . . . never manifesting the remotest scintilla of feeling," all of which represents, I dare to say, the lousiest critical estimate ever penned in a very important, a very fine appraisal of world literature.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

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Catholic Literary France, by Sister Jerome Keeler, O.S.B. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company. $2.75.

EXCEPT for Léon Bloy the major—and a number of the minor—French Catholic novelists, poets and dramatists of recent years are included in this volume; it is unfortunate that the promising Maxence van der Meersch is also neglected. "Catholic Literary France" is not a work of literary criticism but rather a chatty compendium of biographical bits, summaries of the plots of plays and novels, and quotations from various critics liberally sprinkled with warning against Gallic frankness. Yet it is well to have these writers called to our attention. E. S.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

A History of Mexico, by Henry Bramford Parkes. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.75.

THE BLURB presents this volume as the first complete history of Mexico from the beginning to the present day. If this is taken to mean that no other history exists which outlines the evolution of Mexico from the time nebulous Indian tribes pushed down from Bering Strait until the late rebellion under Saturnino Cedillo, this claim may be sound. On the other hand several excellent manuals of a Mexican history exist, not the least among them the widely accepted text of Herbert Priestley. There is no question that there is room for a good single volume presentation of the salient facts of Mexican history in English, especially after the inundation of interpretative studies which have poured from the press in recent years. So much has been written on the agrarian reform, the *ejido* and the incorporation of the Indian that it is indispensable that these contemporary steps be fitted into the larger pattern of Mexican affairs; otherwise perspective may be entirely lost.

Fundamentally this volume gives little that is new, following the more or less conventional lines of approach. There is little that can be said about the conquest that is new or startlingly original. Mexican history has resolved itself largely into a matter of the angle from which it is examined. In Mexico, the two schools of thought on the subject may be indicated by the little text of Alfonso Teja Zabre and the more voluminous manual of Mexican history from the pen of the prolific José Vasconcellos. Dr. Parkes does not go to either extreme, maintaining to a fair degree a proper balance between the Indianist and the purely Hispanic approach. However, the author indulges in considerable ardor for the liberal, anti-clerical attitude in the interpretation of the history of Mexico.

While frequently benevolent to the Church, there are statements in the text which are certainly open to the most serious question. For example, on page 395, Dr. Parkes asserts that with the anti-clerical legislation of 1931-1932, "for the first time in Mexican history the priests could legitimately complain of religious persecution." This bald statement is fortunately not characteristic of the entire book. It reveals, nevertheless, the fact that the *whole* history of Mexico is yet to be written.

RICHARD PATTEE.

Such Sweet Compulsion: The Autobiography of Geraldine Farrar. New York: The Greystone Press. $3.00.

ONE DAY in 1920, Mr. Sam Goldwyn called on Miss Farrar on urgent business. He explained that Miss Farrar's (silent) pictures were not the success he had expected and that his company faced grave financial embarrassment as her contract for $250,000 for twelve

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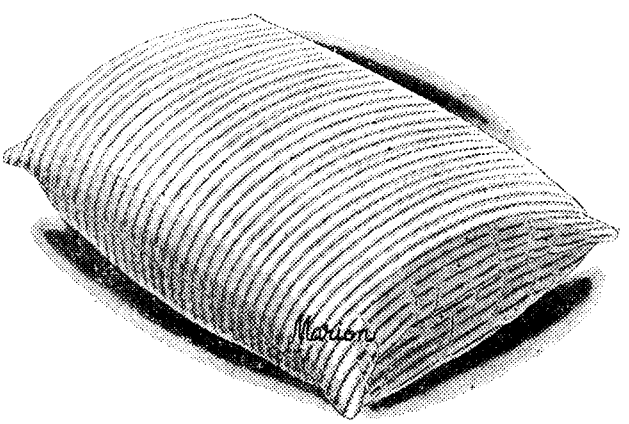

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weeks work per annum had still two years to run. What was the answer? "This—" said Miss Farrar and tore up the contract, thoroughly enjoying the producer's astonishment. She was accustomed to a general lavishness. To the delectation of the Bagby Concert subscribers, she once put more than the lavish fee into a costume of sable tails and silver lace topped by birds of paradise. But the background to it all was one of honest faith and hard work.

At three she began to finger the keys of the piano and it was then that her twenty-year-old mother decided the baby would be a world-famous singer. Father and mother both were soloists in the church choir in Massachusetts and a fellow townsman lent Mrs. Farrar the $500 that took Geraldine to New York where she met Nordica and Melba who encouraged her ambition. A patroness of music in Boston then advanced the three Farrars $30,000, the capital that carried them to Europe. Two years later, after study with Lilli Lehman, Miss Farrar made her debut as Marguerite in the Opera House in Berlin. It is pleasant to know she was securely chaperoned by her parent when she became intimate with the Crown Prince.

Half the story is told by Miss Farrar's mother who died in 1923. Mrs. Farrar was psychic and has supposedly guided her daughter's pen. Unfortunately a great singer and actress is not necessarily an author and another form of "ghost writer" might have made more of Miss Farrar's material. Her life, like most artist's, was self-centered and limited and her observations of life and persons are negligible. Though at first she exercises decorum about her unfortunate marriage, at the end she writes with full candor. In the close affection and loyalty of the father, mother and daughter lies the basic merit of the narrative. EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

Benjamin Franklin, by Carl Van Doren. New York: Viking Press. $3.75.

CARL VAN DOREN'S biography of Benjamin Franklin deserves from almost any standpoint the popularity it will undoubtedly enjoy. It represents long and careful research, a minimum of personal opinion (though naturally the author's enthusiasm for his subject neither can be nor should be avoided), a maximum of quotations from Franklin's own writings, including letters, documents, articles, and even the "Autobiography," and no attempts whatsoever, praises be, to "fictionalize" scenes in the interest of vividness. With scholarly simplicity, Mr. Van Doren practically expands and completes the "Autobiography," letting the great man tell his own story, and letting us form our own conclusions about him. The result is a large book of 800 pages which is uinterruptedly fascinating and leaves the reader, in this age of specialization, a trifle aghast at the scope of a human mind and talents in the little America of the eighteenth century.

Mr. Van Doren, to be sure, in his preface seems to imply that hitherto we have all thought of Franklin as the prim people wish us to, "as a treasure shut up in a savings bank." "I herewith give him back," says the author with an un-Franklin like gesture, "in his grand dimensions, to his nation and the world." It is hardly true that any great number of people for many years have regarded Franklin thus narrowly. But it is true that most of us have known of his many sides by disconnected references, and have never seen them brought together in one continuous life pattern. One of us could discourse on Franklin as our first scientist with the practical American curiosity to put a discovery to work; and another could talk of the fact that Franklin's "Autobiography" was the first self record in literature of the rise of the middle-class tradesman to equality with peers and statesmen; and a third could tell of his Yankee humor, already so different from English; and a fourth of his contributions to American freedom, though almost to the last he hoped we might remain united with the Empire; and a fifth, perhaps with a snigger, could talk of Franklin the natural man. It is when all these, and other facets of Franklin are seen together, in harmonious balance (for assuredly he was a balanced character if ever there was one), that his astonishing greatness as a personality and a mind emerges. Even his "affairs" with women, if they can be called that, were mostly those of an aging but humorous Master Builder with young Hildas whose affection appealed to something eternally young and playful in him.

It has been often said that Franklin was the prophetic pattern of the American that was to be. I am not sure that this is borne out by his biography. He was our first self-made great man, to be sure. And he was prophetic both of Mark Twain's humor and our "practical" scientists and inventors. But his all-round talent, the wide range of his interests and skills (he learned among other things to play four musical instruments, and invented one of them), was and has remained English rather than American. One thinks only of Jefferson and, more slightly, of Theodore Roosevelt in this connection. And his philosophic tolerance in all matters, including religion, was neither characteristic of his countrymen then, nor, alas! now. He belonged with Voltaire and Plato's Academy. Odd that our two greatest men before the Revolution should have been such worlds apart as Franklin and Jonathan Edwards, who, as Mr. Van Doren points out, was the one leading Colonial Franklin never met. And there is no doubt which would have been the more pleasant to live with. WALTER PRITCHARD EATON.

POETRY

Hawk on the Wind, by August Derleth. Philadelphia: Ritten House. $2.00.

ON READING this volume of poetry those who have watched the short, amazingly prolific career of its young author will wonder again at his energy and versatility. Although he is not yet thirty, August Derleth has published a string of popular mystery stories, three volumes in his "Sac Prairie Saga," and stories and poems in dozens of magazines. This is his first volume of poetry. Chosen from hundreds of poems which he has written in the past decade, the selections in this book are an integral part of the story of Wisconsin which Derleth aims to tell in the "Saga."

He is a competent poet. His verse is smooth and pleasant to read, not too experimental in form, and never obscure. He expresses his love of nature and his knowledge of the Wisconsin countryside with delicacy and beauty. He is somewhat preoccupied with an awareness of the passing of time and the inevitable changes that time brings. He says, in effect, this sort of thing again and again:

> "Nothing is left
> to make you think Algonquins had a way
> of passing like smoke through cleft
> hills along the river, to say:
> La Hontan, Marquette, Joliet . . .

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In his poetry Derleth does not reveal emotional, spiritual or intellectual depth of experience. He is always the observer who describes what he has observed in precise and lovely verse but he does not disclose what he thinks is the meaning of the beauty of nature, of life, of death or of time. RUTH BYRNS.

Crags. A Book of Poems, by Clifford J. Laube. New York: The Monastine Press. $2.50.

IT IS never with less than a thrill that poetry-lovers must welcome proof of a fresh, authentic voice in poetry—and both that proof and that thrill come home to us in this little book so lovingly hand-set, printed, bound and illustrated by the author himself. Most of us have known Mr. Laube during the past few years as an admirable critic and journalist and have been arrested more than once by some fugitive verse in the magazines. What we scarcely realized until confronted by this varied collection was the scope of his vision, his hold upon the universals. Seldom has a modern poet watched "at the window-sills of wonder" with more perfect assurance of discovering, in Thompson's profound words, "through the lamp Beauty the Light God."

For in Clifford Laube's nature—as in that of Joyce Kilmer, whom he somewhat resembles—there is an essential simplicity which integrates the apparent contradictions of life, an essential ideality which leaps easily and unaffectedly to the First Cause. This simplicity is elemental and inclusive: it knows the softness of sleeping childhood and the granite hardness of lovers' clashing wills; it is aware of the "sad and immemorial feud" between body and spirit, but also of their possible harmonizing. It vibrates to the beauty of pine-tree and strawberry blossom, to the free waterfall and the disciplined mechanism where

"docile to the valve, impeded flows
The cool and crystal serum of the snows."

In fact there is often an extreme and striking contemporaneity of phrase and thought in these poems—the prayer to be "a cell in the supernal Mind," or to track the Hidden Builder of the skyscraper's "fantasy in steel," or apropos of a papal broadcast, the delightful assertion that

"Peter, with strange unseen Marconian nets,
Launches into the deep."

Those of us who prize the particular beauties of Catholic poetry are lucky to find within a year—shall one say in time for a single Christmas?—four such slim but satisfying volumes as Sister Madeleva's "Gates," Eileen Duggan's "Poems," Father Alfred Barrett's "Mint by Night" and Clifford Laube's "Crags." KATHERINE BRÉGY.

Blind Man's Stick, by Sister Mariella, O.S.B. Boston: Bruce Humphries. $1.50.

SISTER MARIELLA has real poetic quality, a genuine gift of interpeting experience, particularly with regard to nature and even, on occasion, human nature.

"All day Martha heard things said to her
The briefest moment after they were said.
She smiled a little after she answered—
Not with her words. . . ."

Here is a telling picture of one who has been hurt by something she does not understand and even cannot understand. To describe the pod of the jewel weed as a "dehiscent miracle of springs" is good, too. But the trouble seems to be that Sister Mariella rarely can bring

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CORRESPONDENT IN SPAIN

by H. Edward Knoblaugh

The author covered the first year of the Spanish War from behind the Loyalist lines for the Associated Press. His book was welcomed as an excellent, accurate and unbiased bit of reporting. This new edition not only brings it up to the minute, but serves to show the accuracy of the author's predictions. *264 pages, $2.50.*

S & W Discovery—

Checking up, we found that last Fall season we sold twice as many old books as new books, last Spring three times as many. This has startled everyone to whom we have mentioned it, but nobody more than ourselves. It looks as though we are publishing books of good, lasting qualities. Here are a dozen taken from a list of books published some time ago, and still selling in a really cheering way:

Belloc: CHARACTERS OF THE REFORMATION ($3.50)
Chesterton: AUTOBIOGRAPHY ($3.00)
Dawson: RELIGION AND THE MODERN STATE ($2.00)
Farrow: DAMIEN THE LEPER ($2.50)
Feeney: FISH ON FRIDAY ($1.50)
Ghéon: ST. JOHN BOSCO ($2.00)
Leen: PROGRESS THROUGH MENTAL PRAYER ($2.50)
Lunn: WITHIN THAT CITY ($2.50)
Martindale: WHAT ARE SAINTS? ($1.25)
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Walsh: PHILIP II ($5.00)

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Next Week

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to completion a poem which contains much that is of genuine worth. She comes close to it in "Martha," she achieves it in "Apples in the Grass" and achieves it, almost superbly, in "Modern Poets." "Descent" and "Curves" have their charm. I, myself, because I like that sort of thing, applaud "An Old Shoe."

Sister Mariella would seem to have two principal faults, as I see it, in the verse which goes to make up "Blind Man's Stick." She perseveres in the use of well-worn adjectives combined to well-worn nouns—it is the combination which is bad—as in "silver wings," "weary feet," "utter loneliness," "infinite desire." Only a few such phrases can mar much that deserves better. And she will be coyly playful, even when the occasion is lacking. The worst specimens of this are the five unhappy poems for children which end the book. And whenever she makes a new collection of her verse, she should take care to make explicit the secular meaning of the two last lines of one of her best sonnets, "To One Reticent," which now unfortunately can be read with a religious meaning:

> "Not what we worship but that we learn to kneel
> Is life's best gift to those who dream and feel."

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

Mint by Night, by Alfred Barrett. New York: The America Press. $1.50.

WE HAVE here the first collection of the poems of a recently ordained Jesuit. But as no member of his society is ordained while still very young (Father Barrett is thirty-two), the work offered us is all fully mature. This poet clearly knows how to use his tools.

The pieces included are (as might be expected) all more or less related to religion. But the note of obvious and facile poetry is avoided; instead Father Barrett is delicate, reticent—sometimes even whimsical and witty. He can, however, be genuinely moving, as in the thrilling last line of his "Stille Nacht," which tells how there remain in Nazi Germany those who to their German hearts clasp a Jew, or in the deadly, though restrained, satire of his sonnet "Conjecture," or in the dainty grace of "Saint Francis de Sales," or in the tenderness of "Two Carthaginian Girls," who are Saints Perpetua and Felicitas, the two young martyrs whose names are in the Canon of the Mass.

Though all the poems may be read with pleasure, the one that is in a class by itself is that which gives its title to this collection. Here is something worthy a place in almost any anthology. Unluckily it is too long to quote here in full and to use a few lines only would be to do Father Barrett an injustice. His book is admirably produced: most publishers would have charged another dollar for it.

JOHN KENNETH MERTON.

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The Inner Forum

THE NEWS of the last few months has turned the attention of the whole world upon the problems arising from anti-Semitism. The Catholic body in the United States has not been slow in responding. For several years there has been in existence the National Conference of Jews and Christians which includes a number of Catholics as participants in its activities. It issues a weekly "religious news service," making available to the American press information relating to better feeling between religious bodies; it conducts public forums on religious prejudice as well as more intimate round table discussions. For some years there has been a monthly Catholic review dedicated to the study of racial problems, *Interracial Justice*. It has so far principally concerned itself with the relations between Negroes and whites in the country, although its editorial point of view, which is that of Christian democracy and a firm belief in the dignity of the individual and the unity of the human race, is naturally opposed to anti-Semitism. The editors of this review have now decided to broaden their interest somewhat to take in the question of the Jews, although they do not conceive anti-Semitism as being a racial problem. They plan an intensive campaign in behalf of the principles of Christian democracy and the dignity of man.

The National Catholic Alumni Federation, which for some time has been holding biennial meetings devoted to study of more specialized aspects of the problems taken up in its basic pamphlet, "The Defense of Man," is seriously considering anti-Semitism as the special subject for its 1939 convention, which is to be held in New York. A few days ago the National Council of Catholic Men urged upon President Roosevelt that he cooperate in a solution of the Palestinian problem which will not deprive Jews of an asylum in their traditional home; the council made "open profession of our sympathy for all who are . . . afflicted" by the "suffering and distress which overwhelms so many of our fellow men. . . ." And from Rome come rumors that there is soon to be initiated a world-wide movement of Catholics who will dedicate themselves to spiritual works intended to combat anti-Semitism.

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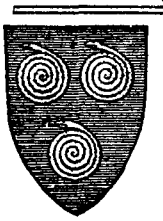

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